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ABSTRACT

This guide is the last of four intended to help persons involved in planning new schools, new programs, or other comprehensive change projects. The materials consist of readings to be done individually and exercises to be done individually and/or with a group. Guide 4 focuses on the linkage between the plan and the actual implementation of the new school, on means for staffing the new school, and on troubleshooting and renewing the new school after start-up. This guide is oriented to what might be called the operational link--planning/implementation linkage--how to make sure that what happens when the school opens is congruent with what the planners envisioned. (Author/MLF)

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4: MAKING YOUR SCHOOL WORK

part 4 in a series of four new-school planning guides

EA 011 515

4: MAKING YOUR SCHOOL WORK

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This volume is a portion of the Final Report, Grant NIE-G-74-0051, "Designing and Starting Innovative Schools: A Field Study of Social Architecture in Education," Matthew B. Miles, Principal Investigator. The Final Report contains the following parts:

PART I: INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary
New Schools as a Strategy for Educational Improvement
Planning and Implementing New Schools: A General Framework

PART II: RESEARCH METHODS

Project Overview
Research Methods
Appendices

PART III: CASE STUDIES

Westgate Schools: A Case Study of Two Open-space Elementary Schools
Change and Conflict: Educational Innovation in Community Context
Innovation in Lakeport
College High School: A Planning Case Study
The Founding of Julius Appelbaum High School
Arts Coop: An Experimental High School Program

PART IV: CONCLUSIONS

Reflections on the Case Studies
Implications and Advice

PART V: MAPPING NEW SCHOOLS--A SERIES OF FOUR NEW-SCHOOL PLANNING GUIDES

Guide 1: Setting the Stage for Planning
Guide 2: Designing Your School
Guide 3: Mapping Your School's Environment
Guide 4: Making Your School Work

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FOREWORD

This foreword is not, like most forewords, a blessing, an overture to a musical, or an advertising blurb. Instead, it's a reflection on the basic problem for which these guides are a solution, and some history of how they were produced.

There are many paths to school improvement. All of them work to some extent, and all of them fall far short of their users' hopes. In the early 1960's there was much emphasis on the adoption of specific educational innovations, from PSSC physics to team teaching (Miles, 1964). Much energy has been spent for decades on role-shaping strategies, including pre-service and in-service training (Rubin, 1971). The planned change language of the later 1960's and early 1970's favored "self-renewal and organization development, a strategy based on the idea that educational systems as a whole need to become healthier, with stronger problem-solving capacities.

All of these strategies proved less than effective. New curriculum content somehow did little to change the basic conditions of life and learning in schools; pre-service work was disconnected from the realities of schools and in-service training was feeble; organization development has diffused very slowly (Miles, Fullan and Taylor, 1978).

Another strategy which began to see heavy use in the late 60's was the creation of complete new schools, an approach which let innovators "start from scratch" to build productive educational environments, supposedly freed of the constraints of the established system. Alternative schools flowered; educational "options" became popular; there were hopes for voucher plans; new physical plant was still frequently being built.

It may come as a surprise to many readers that the new-school strategy is still very much in active use in the late 70's. Examples:

- Exactly because of enrollment decline, many school districts are exploring innovative program uses for underused physical plant.
- A recent estimate (Bass, 1978) is that 25 percent of American school districts have created "alternative" programs to enable a wider range of choice.
- Private schools, not including parochial schools, have experienced a 51 percent increase in enrollment since 1971 (Cooper, 1977); new private schools are not rare.
- The National Alternative Schools Program (Flaxman and Homstead, 1978) identified over 1,300 specific alternative schools and programs (both elementary and secondary) sited in public school districts.

- New public schools are being vigorously built in areas where population is expanding, notably the Sunbelt.

- Much physical plant built in the last three decades is badly in need of modernization: where renovated or new facilities are being created, the opportunity to create new programs is present.

- Open-space plans are both economical and philosophically attractive, and have become increasingly popular. But the flexibility and team planning they permit usually mean that a substantially new type of school is being created.

So, new schools, usually with innovative or alternative-like intentions, are much more pervasive than one might expect.*

But the new-school strategy, though it is attractive in its simplicity (start from scratch, make it new, escape the constraints of the old) has many pitfalls. Many new schools rapidly become rigidified, and slip toward carbon copies of the old ones they were supposed to be "alternatives" to. Others lack a coherent overall vision; their disjointed parts add up to little that is new. Even where a clear and innovative vision exists, there are many slips between the ideal and the real (Gross et al, 1971; Smith and Keith, 1971). Staffs of new schools run into unanticipated conflicts among themselves, or find that the district's bureaucratic procedures, or the parents' skeptical opposition, are creating severe problems. Often the original hopes for the school are drastically revised or even abandoned, and loss of staff and dollar resources occurs. Though the new-school strategy can be strikingly successful, it is by no means easy or simple to bring off.

The educational literature of the past two decades contains very little solid knowledge about the problems of planning and implementing new schools. And there is almost no practical help available for the many school districts where the strategy is in use. Even the better textbooks on school planning (for example, Castaldi, 1977) spend most of their pages on the efforts needed to plan the physical facility -- and very little on what it takes to develop a program and a working social system for the new school. Matters such as governance, communication mechanisms, school climate, and problem-solving methods are either taken for granted or left to "emerge." But the social system of the new school needs "architects" just as much as the physical building does. It too must be

---

* Note that the first pronouncement of Ernest Boyer, when he was appointed U.S. Commissioner of Education in 1977, stressed flexibility, variety, and the development of alternative approaches:

> There is an urgent need for more variety in our approaches to the upper grades. The school is the only institution in America where we take the entire population and assume that everyone will perform in the same way for an extended period of time.

designed and built. In a real sense, the "social architecture" determines, far more than the physical setting, just what life in the new school will be like.

These needs for better knowledge and practice in the new-schools domain led us in 1974 to develop the Project on Social Architecture in Education, a four-year effort supported by the National Institute of Education, and by Teacher Corps.

The Project began with intensive interviews with school planners and consultants to retrieve the "state of the art," then moved to intensive study of six new innovative public schools for a two-and-a-half year period. Through detailed documentation of planning -- and actual implementation -- along with interview and questionnaire data, we studied such questions as:

- What processes are involved along the way from initial vision, design, staffing, start-up, and development into a stable system?
- To what degree do these schools achieve their innovative intent?
- What accounts for their success -- or lack of it? What linkages can be traced between early planning and the later implementation process?
- How can the planning and implementation process best be facilitated and aided?

We began to understand more clearly such matters as the importance of a coherent "plan for planning"; how people go about the actual design of the new school; what the political issues in district and community look like; and what it takes to bring the vision of a new school into functioning reality.

From the beginning of the project, we were committed to active dissemination of our findings. We knew that our detailed case studies, or a technical research report, would probably not be of much help to those creating new schools. Special learning materials would be needed.

During the second year of the project, we hired a materials development specialist, Dr. Beverly Loy Taylor. She worked in parallel with the research team, reading their field reports and drafts of case studies, and isolating the key issues around which learning materials should be built. Her persistent questioning was a strong support for clearer conceptualization of these issues, and a work conference she and the research team staged on experimental designs for learning materials was very fruitful. Over the next months, she created materials with a direct and practical "user" orientation. Beverly's work was a strong and lively alternative to the usual "dissemination" strategy of sending out a research report to a largely uninterested audience. And the need to make sense and be helpful to the creators of new schools aided the research effort substantially as it proceeded.

These four guides are the result. They have already gone through two revisions after staff and field feedback, and we think they will be useful to anyone who is contemplating, or is actually in the process of, creating a new school program.

The materials do not require that a new building be the setting. They can be helpful to anyone whose mission is to create a whole, new program, such as an alternative, an "option," a newly opened building, or a radically redesigned school setting. The problems of creating whole programs are, we think, different in important respects from changing a part, such as a textbook, a schedule, or a new course. These guides are thus designed for comprehensive change projects -- especially those which have a new, innovative thrust, and where past practice cannot be easily relied on.

I cannot resist the impulse to mention the energy, creativity and care which Beverly has brought to this project. Our work over the past three years has been a strong and satisfying colleagueship; that is perhaps expectable, but in any case is a very pleasing bonus beyond the pleasure I feel in seeing these guides. I predict they will be extremely useful to those who are faced with the joys and pains of creating new schools.

--Matthew B. Miles

New York City
December 1978

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ABOUT THESE GUIDES

These guides are intended to help people who are planning or implementing new schools. Undertaking such a project requires a rather specialized set of concepts and skills, which are usually outside of the normal experience of most educators and administrators, who are more accustomed to performance and practice than to planning as such.

We should say at the outset that these materials are not aimed at the specific, substantive tasks of new schools, such as selecting curriculum or designing a needs assessment. Rather, these guides focus on the planning process itself and deal with such questions as: What is good planning? Who should be involved? What skills do planners need? How can needed support be obtained to make the plans effective? We call these questions of "meta-planning," or ways of thinking about and organizing the planning process. They are a plan for planning. Meta-planning, we recognize, is an impossible jargon term, but it nevertheless conveys the notion of an overall plan for planning, an approach to the task of planning. Thus, a good meta-plan will greatly facilitate the plans for specific, substantive tasks, such as designing a needs assessment.

It is usually the case that planning and implementing a new school take considerable time, sometimes several years. The tasks usually associated with such an effort include:

- Determining goals for the school
- Developing a vision or rough sketch of what the school will be like
- Designing its organizational structure and "peopling" that structure
- Ensuring a continual supply of adequate financial resources and environmental support to keep the school going
- Using knowledge and expertise to improve the school
- Linking the plans to the implementation of the school
- Mapping strategies for troubleshooting and renewing the school after it begins operation

The broad range of these tasks and the enormous amount of time required to complete them point to the need for an overall strategy. A plan for planning will take account of all of these tasks and provide continuity through time and the inevitable shifting of the planning/implementation group members.

These materials are designed to acquaint you with these tasks and to help you plan an overall, broad-brush strategy for accomplishing them.

Hence, GUIDE 1: SETTING THE STAGE FOR PLANNING, helps orient the reader to the planning enterprise: after dealing with such issues as the composition of the planning group and planning skills, it sets out the primary meta-planning tasks for a new school.

GUIDE 2: DESIGNING YOUR SCHOOL then examines means by which to clarify goals and methods of designing social systems before it focuses on the particular issues of new-school design.

GUIDE 3: MAPPING YOUR SCHOOL'S ENVIRONMENT looks at the political side of planning new schools by examining the interface between the new-school planners/implementers and their environment (district, community) and then offers a number of strategies and tactics for dealing effectively with that environment.

Finally, GUIDE 4: MAKING YOUR SCHOOL WORK, focuses on the linkage between the plan and the actual implementation of the new school, on means for staffing the new school, and on troubleshooting and renewing the new school after start-up.

For all of these guides, new-school planners and implementers have provided the context, and wherever possible, our points are illustrated with concrete examples drawn from the experiences of actual new-school planners and implementers.

It would be wonderful to be able to provide every new-school planner or implementer with a detailed, step-by-step program of action: the answers on exactly what, when, and how to do it.

Such answers do not exist. No two situations are so alike as to invite close comparison and a recipe for action. What does exist are some general approaches and strategies that have been used more or less successfully by other planners and implementers. We hope they serve you well.

HOW TO USE THESE GUIDES

These materials are based on in-depth studies of six new-school planning efforts and they draw heavily upon that case data as well as from other experiences and work of staff members, consultants, writers and researchers.

The guides consist of readings to be done individually and exercises to be done individually and/or with a group. These exercises are open-ended and self-analyzing, rather than prescriptive with fixed answers. Since there is considerable reading as well as a number of exercises that call for writing in the guide, it is recommended that each member of the planning group have his or her own copy.

The materials can be used on your own, if you wish, without a consultant's help. The following features facilitate easy use of the guides:

- MODULARISM

  The materials in each guide are divided into separate modules that may be used independently of one another. While there is a natural flow from one section to the next, it is not necessary to begin at the

front and go all of the way through to the end. Instead, we hope that the user will pick those sections that are most appropriate or relevant to the situation at hand and turn directly to them as needed.

The first page of each module lists at the top those questions dealt with in that module. Then, the sections of the module repeat those questions as headings for the topics being developed. The user would do well to read those questions first and then skim the sections that follow. This will permit a decision on whether a particular module is an important area to be used.

Once a decision has been made to use a module, we recommend that you do the reading before meeting with your group so that you will have a basis for discussion and for completing group exercises. Write notes to yourself in the margins or on the blank pages to spur your memory when you meet with your group.

Note that while the material is divided into modules by subject, we have not hesitated to introduce and discuss in one section issues or ideas that are treated more fully in another. The user will always be referred to other sections that deal with a similar topic, but we have allowed a limited amount of repetition for the sake of continuity within sections. That is to say, we have assumed it would be more convenient for each section to be usable relatively independently of the others, without the need for the user having constantly to skip to other sections or guides to pick up relevant points.

• EXERCISES

The exercises in these guides are activities designed to provide users with some practical task to do that is related to the preceding discussion. The exercises are printed on colored pages so that they can be easily found and, in addition, are marked with a "DO" symbol to indicate that something is to be done rather than simply read. The activities are also accompanied by an estimate of the time needed for their completion, which appears in parentheses on the right side of the page. These time estimates are loose and will vary according to individual characteristics of the users.

These exercises can be done by an individual, by two or three people working together, or by a small- to medium-sized group.

Many exercises are accompanied by the suggestion that one's responses be compared and discussed with others in the group. Such discussion offers an expansion of the value of the activity; it is not absolutely necessary in most cases for an individual using the materials to seek out others for this purpose.

When a group does use the materials, we suggest that a facilitator be appointed to keep things moving along. This function could be fulfilled by one person throughout or by a rotation among your members.

Exercises are announced and their intent is explained on the pages preceding them.

Finally, we have tried to leave some blank pages here and there throughout the guides to encourage their use as workbooks. We hope that you will write freely on the blank pages, in the spaces provided in some of the exercises, and in the margins of the text. Plenty of ideas will occur to you as you use these materials. We hope that you will write them down as they occur and turn these guides into your books.

- ITALICS AND BOXES

Case study illustrations have been printed in italics and been boxed to highlight them for your easy retrieval when you remember an example particularly relevant to your own situation but can't quite remember where you read it.

Most of these illustrations were drawn from other parts of this Final Report. See page ii for a complete listing of them.

- RESOURCES

The last section of each guide is a Resources piece which lists all references used in the text (most have been footnoted as well).

In addition, we have included what we think are useful listings that might be of help or further information to readers wishing to get deeper into a topic.

These resources represent a selection of those that we have found to be particularly helpful. We offer them to you in the hope that some will provide some help in your work.

Introduction
Linking Plans to Action

INTRODUCTION: LINKING PLANS TO ACTION

WHAT'S INVOLVED IN EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION?

When you think about it, planning and implementing are two very different, very important sets of skills that are required to bring a new school into existence.

Conceptualizing educational plans, levels of organization and structures, roles of participants, decision-making methods -- in short, envisioning a new setting -- are some of the skills used by planners.

Creating activities, schedules, spaces, resources, ways to deal with the ongoing as well as the unforeseen events -- taking action on the real world to create that new setting -- are the skills of implementers.

These two sets of skills are often divergent, and seldom possessed by a single person. Usually, people skilled in envisioning or conceptualizing are less effective at putting into practice the details of a plan, and vice versa. So, often, there are two separate groups -- the planners and the implementers -- working more or less separately, during different time periods, and with different focuses to bring the new school into existence. Potentially, and in practice, there are gaps that need to be noted, averted, or closed if effective implementation is to take place.

Thus, careful linkage between planners and implementers -- between the planning and the doing -- becomes critical. Said one planner:

> *You absolutely need different people to do the planning and the implementing, but fitting them together is the problem. Planners might have worked on developing the philosophy of the school for over a year. Then the new teachers come in and they look at a single sheet of paper with the school's "philosophy" on it, but they haven't gone through the process that the planners went through to get to that. So,*

how do you insure accurate translation into implementation without putting the implementers through the whole planning process again?

▶ LINKAGE IS A SOCIAL PROCESS

There are many types of linkages between what you think you're going to do and what you end up doing. One method of analysis looks at the relationship between the planning group and the implementing group. For example:

- The planners continue as principal implementers
- The planning group enlarges to include all or some of the implementers
- The planning group hires or selects the implementers and then serves in a consulting role
- The planning group turns all responsibilities over to (and may never meet) the implementers

No one of these approaches guarantees a strong linkage, and thus a "good" implementation. Much depends on who are in the groups and how they relate to one another.

• THE CAST.

The composition of your planning group has probably been determined. You may have selected or identified those individuals who will continue the planning effort and carry out the plan as well. Nevertheless, the following discussion may be instructive for clarifying the roles of the key people in the planning/implementation linkage process and for increasing your awareness of common pitfalls that sometimes interfere with the success of the linkage.

A planning/implementation group may contain representatives of some or all of the following:

- EXPERTS -- persons with competence in the various social or substantive areas of the school
- OPERATORS -- people who will actually administer or teach in the school; they are the doers who take an active role
- GATEKEEPERS -- key people who control access to resources
- CLIENTS -- persons who will benefit from the school, including students and parents

When you consider that a planning group can be made up of any combination of experts, operators, gatekeepers, and clients, and that these individuals may be found in positions of responsibility at either the planning or implementation stage or both, you realize that there is an exceedingly large number of possibilities.

There probably is no best composition for a planning group or ideal method for transferring the plan into action. There are, however, some common sense features and principles that can be used to evaluate the likelihood that a planning effort will result in a successful implementation.

- TRANSFERRING THE PLANS FROM PLANNERS TO IMPLEMENTERS.

At one of the sites that we studied, the planning chairperson discussed early in the planning the need to decide the continuing role of the planning group once the director was hired. She pointed out the dilemma that both planners and implementers face at the time of transfer from planning to implementing:

> *Planners are torn between the protection they feel for their plans, their hard work and commitment and, at the same time, their desire to unburden themselves, to pass the work on to someone else.*
>
> *The implementers are caught between the desire to keep the planners on board for their help and the desire for autonomy, wishing the planners would just go away.*

A successful transfer requires clear goals and vision as well as good communication between the planners who are committed to them and the implementers who are to accept them. At the above site, a successful transfer was made:

> *The planner had kept a detailed and documented planning notebook, which provided not only a record of the planning decisions made, but also (and perhaps more importantly) the history and rationale of those decisions and actions. She gave this notebook to the new director of the school, along with much advice and considerable help in mapping out strategies and making contacts with various members of the communities with whom he would be working.*

While the planner did publicity and continued with necessary political work for the new school, she aided the director in setting up his visiting schedule, put him in touch with the necessary people, and kept him abreast of what she was doing. Her guidance provided him with the needed continuity for a successful transfer of plans and an ultimate good implementation of them.

- WHAT IS "GOOD" IMPLEMENTATION?

A successful implementation is one that:

- Retains the original vision of the planning group; it is true to the planners' intent and can be called a "goal-congruent implementation"
- Insures the new school's continued ability to cope with problems on its own
- Results in satisfied stakeholders (students, parents, anyone having a stake in the new school)

Successful implementation tends to be associated with the following capabilities, at minimum:

- Involvement by a diverse group of people
- A concerted attempt to build ownership or investment and provide for training of the implementers
- Being open to and making optimal use of expertise and resources from within the district and community as well as from the "outside world," especially with respect to skills of planning, communication, and methodology
- Anticipating and dealing with conflicts between theory and practice, and among all the stakeholders involved in the process

Exercise

In "THREE SCHOOLS," beginning on the next page, hypothetical case studies have been pieced together from real case studies that examined the planning/implementation linkages in new, experimental schools. Use the features and capabilities discussed above to evaluate or comment on each description.

DD

THREE SCHOOLS (20-30 min)

Read each case study and complete its accompanying evaluation form. Then turn the page for comments on the case.

When you have finished the three cases, use the criteria to evaluate your own planning/implementation linkage plan.

CAREER HIGH

Career High, an experimental high school designed to link an urban high school to a network of community colleges, is being planned by representatives of the colleges, the district central office and union personnel. The planning group has placed emphasis on budgeting, planning the structure and governance of the school, and insuring that the goals of the school are not subverted by bureaucratic exigencies. With six months to go before the September start-up date, the planning group has given itself until June 1 to select a principal and has scheduled an open community meeting for July 28. The planning group has relied heavily on the advice of a planner from one of the community colleges, but has decided to leave the details of the implementation up to the principal.

EVALUATE CAREER HIGH ACCORDING TO THESE CRITERIA:

	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	WHY?
1. Insuring goal-congruent implementation	—	—	—	_____
2. Insuring problem-solving capability	—	—	—	_____
3. Satisfying stakeholders	—	—	—	_____
4. Diverse involvement	—	—	—	_____
5. Ownership and training	—	—	—	_____
6. Using expertise	—	—	—	_____
7. Conflict management	—	—	—	_____

WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD YOU MAKE?

(Please turn the page.)

EXERCISE 1

COMMENTS ON CAREER HIGH

The planning group at Career High seems to be emphasizing gatekeeping tasks at the expense of building support in the community and insuring adequate ownership and investment on the part of the implementers.

TASK WARNINGS might include:

- No provision for involving the principal and teachers in the planning process
- Limited time to invest the principal and teachers with ownership and to provide for training
- Informing the community at such a late stage may leave the school open for conflict
- No provision for keeping the planning group involved
- No provision for insuring that the goals are retained throughout the process

(Please go to next page.)

MAXWELL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Maxwell Middle School is being planned by a committee of teachers and PTA representatives under a mandate from the Board of Education. The goals of the school center upon open education and team teaching. With six months to go before start-up, a staff has been selected from the three feeder schools, and representatives from this staff have been invited to join the planning group. For the most part, the staff was selected on the basis of years of teaching experience and professed interest in the school's goals. The planners, in cooperation with the teachers, are currently screening candidates for the position of principal. They are looking for an individual with experience in administering an innovative school.

Continued input from the community has been insured by holding frequent open meetings during the past year. To a great extent, the goals, structure, and policies have grown out of the concerns voiced at these meetings. Representatives from the Board of Education and district administrative staff have expressed interest in attending the planning meetings. However, it was the opinion of the planners that this would not be appropriate until the goals have been worked out and the principal selected.

EVALUATE MAXWELL MIDDLE ACCORDING TO THESE CRITERIA:

	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	WHY?
1. Insuring goal-congruent implementation	—	—	—	_____
2. Insuring problem-solving capability	—	—	—	_____
3. Satisfying stakeholders	—	—	—	_____
4. Diverse involvement	—	—	—	_____
5. Ownership and training	—	—	—	_____
6. Using expertise	—	—	—	_____
7. Conflict management	—	—	—	_____

WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD YOU MAKE?

(Please turn the page.)

COMMENTS ON MAXWELL MIDDLE SCHOOL

The planning group at Maxwell Middle School seems to be emphasizing community interests to the exclusion of central office and Board interests. Innovative schools are often hampered by a failure to recognize the importance of the gatekeeping function -- knowing who controls the resources and the power.

TASK WARNINGS include:

- Low recognition that a curriculum is affected by political considerations, union rules, authority patterns, etc.
- The possibility that the opinions voiced at open meetings may not represent those of the community-at-large
- The possibility that "interest in the school's goals" may not be associated with commitment to or experience with these goals
- Excluding representatives from the central office may not only produce conflict and restrict resources but may preserve the ignorance of the planning group with respect to important knowledge and skills

(Please go to next page.)

ENVIRONS

Environs will be an experimental high school which will focus on environmental concerns and energy issues to provide focal concepts for team teaching instruction in all subject matter areas. Environs is being planned by a group made up of gatekeepers, an acting principal, and an environmentalist who lives in the community. Because of the special nature of the school, the environmentalist has been charged with recruiting teachers, a task that has necessitated a ten-state search for candidates who combine expertise in environmentalism with experience in subject matter areas. The acting principal, who will become the assistant principal of the new school is responsible for hiring the principal.

Interest on the part of the community has been relatively high. The planning group decided to respond to some of the questions and issues raised at community meetings by placing an advertisement in the local paper which stressed the school's goals and the needs which these goals addressed. When the community began to voice objections, the planners voted to wait and let the new principal smooth things over.

EVALUATE ENVIRONS ACCORDING TO THESE CRITERIA:

	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	WHY?
1. Insuring goal-congruent implementation	—	—	—	_____
2. Insuring problem-solving capability	—	—	—	_____
3. Satisfying stakeholders	—	—	—	_____
4. Diverse involvement	—	—	—	_____
5. Ownership and training	—	—	—	_____
6. Using expertise	—	—	—	_____
7. Conflict management	—	—	—	_____

WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD YOU MAKE?

(Please turn the page.)

COMMENTS ON ENVIRONS

Environs' strength seems to be in the diversity embodied in its planning group and in the effort it is putting forth to insure expertise in implementing the goal of teaching about environmental issues. No mention, however, is made of what they are doing with respect to the team teaching goal. Moreover, by selecting for expertise, they may be running the risk of underplaying the need to have staff that are committed to an innovation. And because the staff will be new to the community, they may not have the will to resist possible community pressures.

TASK WARNINGS include:

- It might be better to select a principal by using a representative group of stakeholders, rather than a single individual
- Advertisements may not be the best way to gain community support. This tactic often serves as a red flag to attract opposition instead of approval.
- It might be better to select a principal prior to the time that staff are selected so that the principal can share in the responsibility
- "Demoting" the acting principal to assistant principal when the new principal is hired will be demoralizing and may cause hard feelings

(Please go to next page.)

OUR OWN PLANNING/IMPLEMENTATION LINKAGE PLAN

EVALUATE YOUR OWN PLAN ACCORDING TO THESE CRITERIA:

	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	WHY?
1. Insuring goal-congruent implementation	—	—	—	_____
2. Insuring problem-solving capability	—	—	—	_____
3. Satisfying stakeholders	—	—	—	_____
4. Diverse involvement	—	—	—	_____
5. Ownership and training	—	—	—	_____
6. Using expertise	—	—	—	_____
7. Conflict management	—	—	—	_____

WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD YOU MAKE TO YOURSELVES?

▶ STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE LINKAGE

Listed below are some strategies identified by participants at a work conference on issues of planning and implementing new schools:

- Select the principal/director very early and install as head of planning group (or work to get the principal/director appointed from among group membership). The latter can create problems if there are multiple candidates and can confuse "planning" with "manipulation" sometimes.
- Present plan to candidates for principal/director position as part of the recruting and selecting process.
- Involve implementers other than principal/director (e.g., teachers) early in the planning. This will run into resistance from those allocating resources, however.
- Clarify the real power and influence the planning group will have vis-a-vis the implementers. This is a tradeoff: Better articulation, but possibly poorer quality plans; poorer articulation and alienated community or staff, though plan may be "good."
- Use consultants to: (a) build teams among implementers (e.g., teaching staff sub-groups) strong enough to be their own support system, not vulnerable to poor leadership from principal/director; (b) reduce community resistance and suspicion about planning.
- Use central office people with commitment to the plan for support, training, and troubleshooting during early implementation.

These participants agreed that linkages were often unplanned and/or weak, even when the same people were the planners and the implementers. One planner said:

> *There's often an anti-planning stance: "We can only plan so much, and then we have to get in and do it."*

Several factors for failures in linkage were cited as targets for attention. They included:

- Bureaucratic constraints -- e.g., no released time for planning, no money for inservice training, administrative blockage of involvement of key implementers

- Inadequate planning maps -- e.g., decision-makers with no feel for the planning process, lack of attention to what you do when you finish planning, view that there is no overlap between planning and implementation

- Ineffective leadership -- e.g., a principal who doesn't understand the concept of linkage, is afraid or unwilling to admit it, and just ignores it; a principal who blocks assistance or involvement of others

The overall impression of this group of planners, implementers, and consultants was that there was too little analysis of how "X affects Y," and that there were inadequate structures for learning: principals, teachers, central office administrators meet separately, and each is "running a different kind of school." Thus, approaches tend to be piecemeal, and ineffective.

▶ A NOTE ON LINKAGES

Planning a new school is a complicated and diffuse process. Links exist between the different aspects of planning processes -- political links, technical links, links between vision and goals, between goals and organizational design.

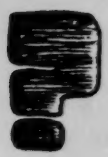
This guide is oriented to what might be called the operational link -- planning/implementation linkage -- how to make sure that what happens when the school opens is congruent with what the planners envisioned. To insure that this linkage occurs demands explicit attention to the selection and training of the principal and staff, maintenance of investment, anticipation of problems, and specification of a good implementation plan.

Linkage, good or bad, affects the start-up and operation of the school. This guide, then, deals with the following activities so important to new-school implementation:

- Protection of the plan and the implementers
- Peopling of the school
- Troubleshooting after start-up
- Diagnosing and intervening when needed
- Renewing and stabilizing new-school operation

Module 1
Protecting the Plan and the Implementers

PROTECTING THE PLAN AND THE IMPLEMENTERS 1



HOW CAN WE PROTECT THE NEW-SCHOOL PLAN?
HOW CAN WE PROTECT THE IMPLEMENTERS?

Much work, time, and energy have gone into the creation of the plans for your new school. Throughout the process, you may have wondered from time to time how you might insure a successful translation of the plans into action. One planning group that we studied attempted to create a "teacher-proof" design and curriculum, so detailed that no mistakes or straying from the intent could occur. Another group of planners took the opposite approach: they only broadly sketched their ideas and plans, and they left the interpretation up to the implementers, whom they had selected very carefully.

In addition to thoughts of protecting the plan, you may want to consider protecting the implementers once they come on board. What kind of support and help will they need in order to carry out the functions of the new-school plan?

There is, of course, a limit to what planners (and implementers) can do to insure a good implementation of the new-school plan. Many slips and gaps, not to mention reassessments and changes, will occur throughout the early implementation stage.

This module deals with some issues and means by which these gaps can be minimized.

- Protecting the plan has to do with the interaction between planners and implementers
- Protecting the implementers concerns the implementers in relation to their setting (school and community)

HOW CAN WE PROTECT THE NEW-SCHOOL PLAN?

Planning is an engaging task, so much so that planners sometimes have to remind themselves of the realities that will impinge upon their ultimate piece of work. It's easy to assume that others will understand, and accept, what has taken months to formulate at planning meetings. It's also easy to forget the needs of the implementers.

The planning is important, certainly, but so is the communication of the plans to those who have to understand them in order to implement them. Enough attention and time must be allotted to this transferral process, else all the planning work will amount to nothing.

Planners must remember that implementing someone else's ideas is a very difficult task. As much help as possible should be planned and provided as just one other element of the total planning process.

The resulting accuracy or distortion of the new-school implementation will relate directly to the:

- Clarity with which the plans are communicated to the implementers
- Supports provided to the implementers
- Match between the implementers selected and the elements of the plan
- Opportunity for implementers to participate in aspects of planning, to affect the plan's development, and thereby to build their own commitment to it

This part of Module 1 will deal briefly with the above issues in turn.

▶ CLARITY OF THE PLANS

While it is important that the plans themselves be clear and have an internal fit between various pieces, we speak here of the advisability of having a good fix on the plans so that they can be communicated easily. It will help if you can answer these questions about your plans:

- What is essential to the plans?
- What is the intent of the plans?
- What assumptions underlie the vision of the plans?

It would be a help to your communication of the plans if you and your group prepared a statement of a page or so that outlined these three important elements of your work.

If these elements are the "bottom line" of your new-school plans, a useful question for your planning group to address is:

WHAT ARE THE LIMITS OF YOUR FLEXIBILITY ON THESE MAIN ELEMENTS AND ON OTHER, LESS CRITICAL, ONES?

It might help to decide early (before you're faced with it) how far your flexibility can be pushed. Since the probabilities of unanticipated events and unexpected pressures are close to 100 percent, you may well be placed in a position of having to give up or change some of the goals that led to the new-school plans.

On the other hand, opportunity may strike, resources may be made available, you might change your mind -- with the result that you could find it desirable to add, subtract, or change goals.

New schools are often caught in a dilemma between the desire to retain the letter or at least the spirit of the plans and the need to compromise and change as crises emerge during planning and implementation. The commitment to a vision and a set of goals that builds up during the planning process tends to strengthen the adherence side of the dilemma. On the other hand, opposition from traditional parts of the system and from vested interests, for example, tend to move planners and implementers toward revision, or even abandonment, of central goals.

Here's an example from one of our sites:

The planners and director for Arts Coop, the experimental arts high school, had from the beginning strongly-held goals of "community-building" (knitting together students and faculty into a cohesive whole) and "interdisciplinary learning" (dealing with issues in art across the range of specializations).

At the last faculty meeting before Arts Coop was to open, the director reviewed a plan to have one or two

days per week as "interdisciplinary" time for dealing with a generic issue such as "form," across all of the arts. From the field notes:

> *Paul objected to this whole idea and said he thought they had decided they were not going to impose on the kids...The director said the interdisciplinary approach was the presumption of the program. George said the kids should decide what areas they should work on...Barbara objected -- wouldn't this disperse the kids too much? They wouldn't be able to develop anything in depth. Wouldn't it be better to delay the interdisciplinary approach for awhile? Daisy supported the interdisciplinary idea, since the arts in general had that quality. But Paul objected, saying that dance was unique, and you couldn't melt it into other art forms...The director then said he felt they had to start with an interdisciplinary approach in the beginning, perhaps just once a week. The others eventually came around to accept the idea.*

In this example, the pressures for change were internal -- the implementers hadn't really accepted the interdisciplinary goal. At other times, the pressure may be external, often in the form of limitations on resources. As planners, or implementers, you must be prepared to deal with such pressures.

Exercise

On the next page is "HOW FAR WILL YOU FLEX?," an exercise that asks you to examine your goals in terms of the probability that they will have to be changed. Do the exercise individually, then discuss your results with others in your group.

When you complete the exercise, you should have some ideas on how to deal with those pressures for goal changes.

DO

HOW FAR WILL YOU FLEX? (30-45 min)

List your goals for your school down the left side. Rate each goal from 1 (most important) to 5 (least important). Estimate the probability of each goal being subject to pressure for change from 1 (most likely) to 5 (least likely). Next, describe a strategy for dealing with the pressure but retaining the spirit of the goal.

GOALS	RATE	CHANGE PROBABILITY	WHAT WE MIGHT DO

(Please turn the page.)

EXERCISE 2

When you have finished, compare your chart with others in your group. Discuss how far you will be willing to flex with respect to each goal. Pay closest attention to those goals with higher priorities and probabilities of change. Use the space below for jotting ideas that arise in the discussion.

▶ SUPPORTS FOR IMPLEMENTERS

By supports, we refer to such things as:

- Documents that describe the new school, its goals, and program
- Written history and rationale to provide the background information important to understanding the plans
- A positive public image, or at least the beginnings of one
- Good contacts with stakeholders, who can serve as a support group

These are supports that implementers can use throughout their start-up and early implementation, or can fall back upon in times of need.

The documents and written history/rationale were illustrated in the Arts Coop example described on pages 5 and 6 of this guide.

Arts Coop provides an example of developing a good public image and stakeholder contacts, as well:

> *The continued survival of Arts Coop was, its planners felt, quite precarious, since the students were supported by special add-on budgets from each of the participating school districts. During the months before the school opened, the planning leader and committee members, who had developed a strong team spirit, made a wide range of efforts to build a broad base of support for the school, including meetings with local business people, the League of Women Voters, each local school board, local artists and art organizations, and widespread coverage in local media. In addition, they talked persuasively to guidance counselors in each of the sending school districts who agreed to serve as "gatekeepers" to inform and enable students to attend Arts Coop, to art teachers, and to principals. The planners also formed a Friends of Arts Coop group to present talks and slide shows to PTAs and other citizen groups.*

These supports provide implementers, already faced with a difficult job, with a sense of continuity (via their place in the ongoing history of this new school, as described in the documents and rationales) as well as an "ecological niche" from which to operate, which is enhanced by the various human supports developed in the environment.

▶ PEOPLING DESIGN

The planners' design for "peopling" the new school with staff and students should, of course, take into account the type of school they are trying to create and the atmosphere, emphases, and attitudes they wish to foster.

The peopling design should aim at achieving the best possible match between the goals of the new school and the skills, experiences, and attitudes of those who will populate it.

To do anything else can only have negative effects on the implementation of the new-school plans.

This topic is dealt with in more detail in Module 2, Peopling the New School, of this guide.

▶ BUILDING OWNERSHIP AMONG IMPLEMENTERS

Ownership of the new school means that implementers accept and identify with what it is trying to do, and feel in some ways personally responsible for its progress. This sense of ownership is important because it leads to -- some say it is prerequisite to -- a commitment to the school's success on the part of its staff.

"The more involved a person is in an activity, the more public the activity, the more effort a person puts into an activity -- all increase that person's commitment to the activity."*

A real sense of ownership, and the commitment to the school that ownership implies, is something that must be built over time. They are the goals of an extended developmental process. It is appropriate, therefore, to plan for this process, using structures and methods that will contribute to its development. Four ownership dimensions are:

- Communication: Constant dialogue, discussion, active sharing of information. To feel uninformed is the start of distrust.
- Involvement: People need to be involved in the process of planning, goal setting, decision making, etc. The antithesis of ownership is feeling left out.

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* Brehm, Sharon S. The Application of Social Psychology to Clinical Practice. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1976.

- Clarity: This relates to communication, but is important as its own category. People are not likely to commit themselves to goals or methods they do not understand. Often these may be clarified through discussion.

- Power: People must feel their input can make a difference, that their participation is not token but real. Ownership grows when people feel that school outcomes may depend on their actions.

An example of ownership building among implementers at one of the sites we studied is this:

Ellis Brown, the new principal of the Lincoln Acres elementary school, recruited his faculty in February and held a series of planning meetings with them during the spring, inviting them to make joint decisions on such matters as the arrangement of space, equipment, materials, and instructional objectives. Data collected as early as the second staff meeting indicated that nearly all faculty members felt that being part of the planning team was an important experience. Several mentioned that it created a sense of ownership and gave them a sense of responsibility.

Brown also decentralized decision making on many issues to the teaching teams, asking them, for example, to work on materials choice.

He also obtained funds for a month of joint planning time during the summer to develop role descriptions, plan space use, develop basic skills objectives, even define the decision-making processes and roles of staff, students, and parents. The proposal for summer planning emphasized the creation of a "personal sense of ownership," saying:

> *...The obvious alternatives of patterning the school after some other school, modeling it after some theoretical structure, or shaping it according to some administrator's or consultant's thinking are rejected.*

This general planning strategy did appear to develop high faculty investment: Their commitment to the arrangement of open space they had developed was so strong that when the principal and resource teacher proposed a reorganization as a compromise to community pressure for walls between teaching areas,

there was a sense of shock and depression among the faculty. Their revised proposal sent to the Board was stridently worded to communicate their dissatisfaction.

Even so, when the school opened, most teachers worked daily until 5:00 or 5:30, and often on weekends.

Exercise

After the implementers are familiar with what your planning group has done so far, try the exercise on the next page, entitled "THE ANTI-MODEL." It is important that you first establish some sort of positive framework within which to work, e.g., "the model" as represented by your new-school plans, the opposite of which could be the "anti-model" which will come out of the exercise.

Set up small working groups that include planners and implementers, then follow the exercise directions.

Remember, it is often easier to know what you don't want to do than to know what to do. Sharing a common vision of an "anti-model" can be an effective way to build solidarity and commitment among the implementers themselves as well as among planners and implementers.

Note that this exercise also may be done by planners or implementers separately, if desired.

DD

THE ANTI-MODEL (1½-2 hrs)

1. Establish several groups of approximately 5-7, including planners and implementers. Put up sheets of newsprint.

2. Brainstorm attributes of an "anti-model" school (a school you really don't want your school to be like). Use one of the following formats:

   - Have an open, anything-goes session using the rules of brainstorming:

     - Think of many, many ideas for your anti-model
     - Think of wild and unusual ideas
     - Hitchhike (build upon) on others' ideas
     - No criticism allowed

   - Brainstorm each of the following categories (these could be divided among the groups):

     - Stated goals
     - Unstated goals
     - Classroom practices
     - School-wide practices
     - Expectations
     - School and community
     - Governance and politics
     - Rules and regulations

3. Flag each of the characteristics on your list that is especially insidious -- characteristics of a school that your group is in complete and vehement opposition against).

4. Discuss briefly what and how much your group would be willing to do to avoid each of these flagged pitfalls.

5. Pick two or three of the flagged items and as a group, build scenarios in which one or more of them creep back into the picture (e.g., teachers want to close up the open space school by bringing in permanent partitions).

6. Discuss how to deal with this backsliding if it were to begin to happen in your school.

EXERCISE 3

HOW CAN WE PROTECT THE IMPLEMENTERS?

The natural inclination of a planning group is to concentrate planning efforts on creating a situation which will maximize the chances of actualizing the group's vision. The tendency, and quite rightly so, is to stress curriculum and instructional practices. In many cases, the impetus for creating a new school comes from a dissatisfaction with the existing methods of treating and preparing students, so the focus in planning becomes student-centered.

The reality of the situation, however, is that new schools rarely fail because of student dissatisfaction or failure. It is far more often the case that schools run into trouble either because they leave themselves vulnerable to external pressures or because they fail to develop an adequate internal support system to preserve their innovations.

In order to carry out good implementation of the school plans, implementers need, at the very least:

- Autonomy
- Coping abilities
- Access to the planners

These three areas are discussed very briefly in this part of Module 1.

▶ AUTONOMY

The tendency of some highly dedicated planners, as noted earlier, often is to develop specific, well-formulated plans with close ties between the planners and the implementers as a means of making sure that the plans are properly carried out.

Other planners tend to recognize the inevitable unanticipated events to which implementers are subjected and thus prefer to leave considerable flexibility and looseness for the implementers and to pay less attention to linkage between themselves and the implementers.

Thus, the issue is how much should the hand of the past control actions in the present? The dilemma is one of constraint versus autonomy. The question is not an easy one to resolve (as is the nature of any true dilemma), even if the planners later become the implementers.

For example:

> *During an interview with one of the planners for Campus High School, when it had become clear that financial and other pressures had indefinitely postponed the location of a site and the hiring of staff, he was asked what the main problems were that had hampered work. He stated:*
>
> > *There's a dichotomy there, that you want to move ahead, but at the same time, you don't want to hire a staff that has no ownership in as important a decision as total planning. So, you're kind of schizophrenic about how fast you should move....You need some of the key actors, the people who are going to implement. You reach a point where to go beyond this is unfair because you are determining the philosophy, the administration, the day-to-day functioning of the school operation without even involving the people who will be living in that environment.*

The stronger the planners' commitment to their goals for the new school, the more likely they may be to constrain the plan and make it specific. Similarly, the more envisioning of possibilities of unanticipated outcomes and unexpected events, the greater the realization that implementers need freedom within which to move.

An example of the latter case comes from the Arts Coop site:

> *After a careful selection process for the director of the new arts school, the planning group (which had produced a broadly sketched plan for the school), attended an evening meeting for the purpose of turning over the enterprise to the director. The re-researcher recorded:*
>
> *It was an emotional meeting for these people who had devoted time over the past year and a half to the development of a program they felt was needed and*

exciting. The director was very easy and warm, greeting people before the start of the meeting, and writing his home and current work phone numbers on a chalkboard. He encouraged the planners to call him any time to talk about their concerns, ideas, or suggestions.

During the meeting, planners deferred to their new director, either giving him "outs" to change things (such as the slide show about the new school) or mentioning appropriate roles the director could play in restating plans and goals that they had already developed.

Thus, this new-school director was given the freedom to act in implementing the school plus the support and help (as much as he needed and wanted) of the planners.

These planners noted that without implementers' ownership of decisions and the freedom to deal with the unexpected (which should always be expected), their hands would be tied -- they would be ineffective. For other planners, the dilemma continues: "What's a plan for if not to direct (constrain) those who are using it?"

▶ COPING ABILITIES

Considering that opening a new school is a full-blown task, with the "darkest being just before dawn"; that is, the biggest scramble and the most anxiety-producing time being the preparation for start-up, it makes a lot of sense to help the implementers develop their coping abilities to the greatest extent possible. They'll need:

- Time -- not only to become thoroughly familiar with the plans but also to do their own planning. Provide them with more than the four hours that were allotted at one site, and more than the more usual one-two weeks. Build into the plan and the budget enough time for the new staff to do what they have to do. How much is enough? One planner reported:

We brought our staff on board during the late spring. We submitted a budget that allowed enough money for a series of workshops throughout the summer. We didn't want the teachers to go in there "cold," because we knew they'd just do the old, familiar stuff.

These implementers thus had time not only to plan curriculum, activities, use of space, resources, and so on, but also to come to grips with themselves as a group, and to establish ways of working together.

- Human resources -- knowing that there are others to call upon when help is needed erases the feeling of isolation and fear that often arises when something new is being created. Continuity between planners and implementers and a network of experts, or people experienced in the areas of the innovation, provide the new staff with a much-needed support structure.

The new staff must have the time and the human resources to insure their own development on two fronts:

- Knowledge and skills in the innovation -- through a well-stocked library of resources, visits to other schools, workshops conducted by those experienced in the area, opportunity to practice the new skills.

- Group skills -- to enable them to function as a group and to cope with the ongoing, daily events as well as to deal with the unexpected. Such skills would include, at a minimum, the following:

    - Decision-making style
    - Problem-solving methods
    - Division of labor

These ways of working will be dealt with in Module 2, Peopling the New School. Resolving these internal issues builds solidarity within the group, making it more capable to deal with new-school activities.

▶ ACCESS TO THE PLANNERS

How can you keep planners feeling ownership without trying to wrest control from the new principal/director? One implementer said:

> *You need to preserve the planning group in order for the implementers to be successful. We are also recognizing the fact that the planning group has been donating its time and they have real commitment to the project. Our problem is to find a way to tap their resources without feeling overrun by them.*

Said a planner:

> *The issue is maintaining a balance between planners and implementers once you reach the transitional stage. As planners, we're ready for the implementers to take the burden off us. On the other hand, we feel the need to protect the plans and make for a smooth transition.*

Two "solutions" to this problem come from our sites:

> *At the Arts Coop site, the new director had the advantage of ready access to the planners since the majority of them had joined one of two groups and had taken up active roles in them: One was the Advisory Council, whose function was to provide consultation to the new-school implementers, as they wished; the other was Friends of Arts Coop, which was the community support and fund-raising arm of the new school.*

Thus, one solution calls for setting up an advisory group which implementers can call upon as needed. Another way, suggested by a planner:

> *We suggested to the people we'd chosen to implement our new school that they consider using a part of their budget for staff development to hire one of us, a planner, to keep on planning and to link with them, the implementers, as they worked.*
>
> *The staff thought this was a good idea, especially since they're just as interested as we are in a smooth start-up.*

The amount of access that implementers have to planners largely depends upon the amount of commitment that the planners have to their work, how much help is needed by the implementers, and of course, how much energy and time the planners still feel they can devote to the enterprise after having finished their piece of it.

Exercise

On the next page is "LINKING THE PRESENT TO THE FUTURE," an exercise that asks you to make up alternative scenarios for problems or issues that you anticipate might become important in your school setting.

This exercise will help you to think ahead to the role of the new-school staff as they put into operation the new plans. By putting yourself in their role, you might get some ideas for heading off some of the problems you think they're likely to face.

Working individually, develop several scenarios. Then come together to brainstorm possible strategies for dealing with the problems you identify.

If you have the time and the opportunity, a workshop run by the planners for the implementers is an excellent means of deepening their (and your) understanding of the school plans and of building ownership and commitment. A one-day workshop might look like this:

SAMPLE AGENDA FOR A LINKAGE WORKSHOP

- Brainstorming an anti-model (1-1½ hours)

  What we really don't want our school to be like. See Exercise 3, "THE ANTI-MODEL," on page 29 of this Guide.

- The planners' plans (1-1½ hours)

  What planners have envisioned as the new school. Presentation of planners' minutes of meetings, history of decisions, etc. as orientation for the implementers. Followed by questions, discussion.

- Five years later (1-1½ hours)

  What we'd like the school to be after five years of operation. As a group, planners and implementers imagine the desired things to have happened, and list them. Then they're ranked as most important, less important, not too important.

- Anticipated issues (45-60 minutes)

  What could become problems. See Exercise 4, "LINKING THE PRESENT TO THE FUTURE," on page 37 of this Guide.

LINKING THE PRESENT TO THE FUTURE (45-60 min)

1. With your group, brainstorm some possible problems, conflicts, or issues that might become important to the implementers of the new school. Examples are:

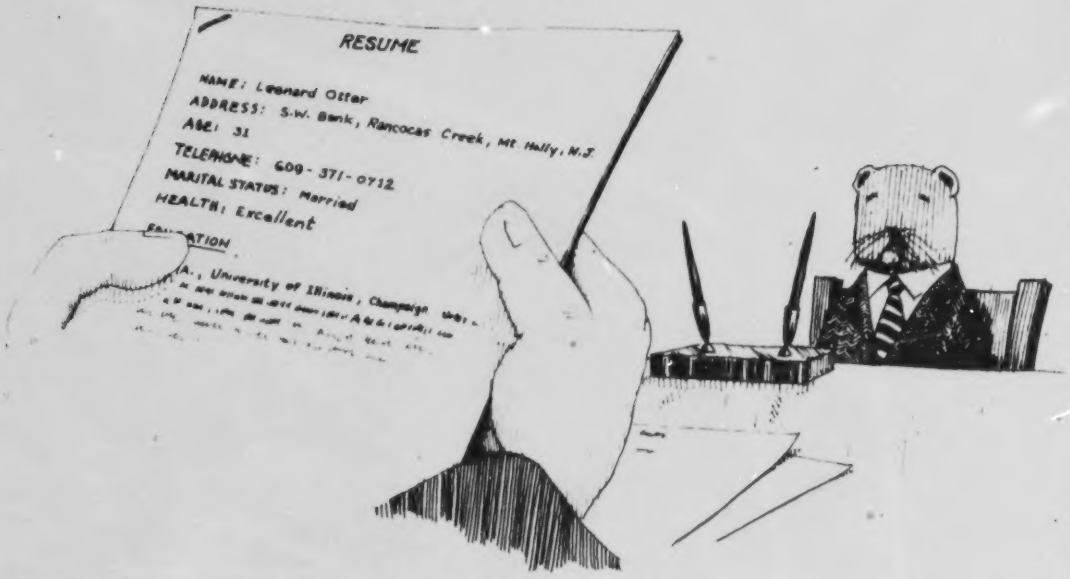
   - Overcoming staff resistance to systematic planning and problem solving
   - Teachers coming to the new school in order to escape their old settings and having no real feeling for the goals of the new school
   - Upgrading instruction among defensive teachers

2. Select an issue and working individually, develop a scenario that describes it in detail -- how it looks, how people deal (or don't deal) with it, its effects, and so on.

3. When you have finished the scenarios, come together as a group to brainstorm strategies for dealing with those problems, before they have a chance to get too big.

EXERCISE 4

Module 2
Peopling the New School



PEOPLING THE NEW SCHOOL 2

HOW CAN WE SELECT THE BEST PEOPLE?
HOW CAN WE BUILD A GOOD STAFF TEAM?
HOW CAN WE PLAN A GOOD SCHOOL START-UP?

The "getting started" phase involves the formation of the operating group, consisting of teachers and other staff, as well as parents and resource people. While some of these operators may have been members of the planning group, most will be new to the new setting.

Once selected, this group of operators will have three major tasks: programmatic (developing and/or revising the program on the basis of operating realities); political (settling issues of governance, authority, accountability, decision making); and social (developing an internal support system with one another).

This getting started period can last anywhere from several months to a year or more, depending upon the site and those who people it. The new school may very well create new roles and ways of functioning for the staff that will carry out its program. Thus, the bringing together of people who are new to each other (at least in terms of the interaction of these new roles); who have varied expectations and reasons for coming; who are going to participate in this new creation; and who bring with them their traditional assumptions, operating procedures, problems, and conceptions of the new school -- needs some time to consider that there are alternative ways of approaching the task and that safeguards will be needed to try to stay open to new methods, rather than to allow slipping back into the familiar, the expedient, the unexamined standard operating procedures.

In The Culture of the School and the Problem of Change (1971) Sarason describes the creation of a new school and summarizes his observations by noting that at the end of the first year, "life in the new school is remarkably similar to that in old ones: what children experience in classrooms, the quality of relationships among teachers and between them and the principal, the relationships among parents, community, and the school, the criteria by which everyone judges themselves and others..." (p. 118)

The myth of starting out "fresh" in a new setting denies the reality of the past. People bring to the new setting their old ways of behaving and responding, and thus they usually interpret the present according to past methods, but without realizing it.

The irony is that a passing acknowledgment of the importance of the past (and of the future) in shaping the present is granted, but the "real business" of the day is getting the school opened and operating. The enormous amount of work needed to get the school going is thus carried out in a way that fits well with the established, existing patterns. Sarason says, "It is like building a home and then deciding how to live in it" (The Creation of Settings, p. 91).

Peopling a new school calls for carrying out such tasks as the following:

- Selecting staff
- Building a staff team
- Planning for school start-up

But these tasks should be done in the context of the past, present, and the future as well as with knowledge of the purpose of the new school and the personal and professional considerations of the people who will populate it.

This module will consider some of these issues.

HOW CAN WE SELECT THE BEST PEOPLE?

Because starting a new school is a unique task, the people responsible for doing it -- the principal/director and the staff -- need to possess particular kinds of qualities. If the school is to be realized, their special skills, knowledge, and experiences must be well utilized.

Selection of the implementers is one of the major areas in which the clarity of the planners' vision and goals for the new school is tested. For, if the vision and goals are clear and well owned by the planners, the tasks of communicating them and converting them into criteria for the selection of implementers will be eased considerably.

This section of Module 2 discusses some important qualities implementers should possess, the role of the principal/director, and some selection processes.

▶ NEW-SCHOOL IMPLEMENTER QUALITIES

The following five qualities, when found in implementers of new schools, will go a long way toward meeting the special needs of creating a new setting:

- MATCH BETWEEN SKILLS AND TASK FUNCTIONS. This is an obvious one, but often it is overlooked or not taken too seriously or, when there is little control over selection due to district regulations, cannot hold a high priority. The clarity of the new-school vision and goals can be used to set selection criteria based on what people will actually be doing in the school. The closer the match, the better the possibilities for success.

- COMMITMENT TO NEW-SCHOOL GOALS. People work toward goals they think are important and that provide them with personal satisfaction. Some new schools, as noted above, don't have too much choice in the selection process, particularly if they must choose from within the district. In these cases, building that commitment to new-school goals becomes even more critical. Without such commitment, the goals will be given lip-service (at best) or ignored or sabotaged (at worst).

- MOTIVATION AND CAPACITY FOR LEARNING. Any setting, new or old, becomes an exciting place when its people are interested in learning new methods and have the capacity to do so. When a new school is attempting to be innovative, this desire for learning on the part of the implementers becomes essential to developing and operating the new program. Many new schools have floundered or taken on the sameness that they sought to avoid because their implementers didn't want to try new things, preferring instead the old and familiar.

- HIGH ENERGY. Starting a new school is hard work! If implementers haven't the energy to put into making it work, it won't. This quality ties in with the level of commitment that people bring to the task of creating the new school. In one site we studied, it wasn't uncommon for teachers to work until 5:30 on weekdays or on weekends after school opened. They had developed a strong commitment to the program and chose to put considerable energy into making it work. It is important to note that this staff had responsibility for planning the program, which led to their growing commitment to it.

- EXPERIENCE IN SCHOOLS. A moderate amount of experience in regular schools can make the difference between the new school's floundering or moving forward. One planner, given the choice between enthusiastic novices and somewhat less committed but practiced teachers, definitely chose the latter. Said he: "I'll take experience any day, and work on building commitment. New schools are hard enough to get going, without having to deal with people who can't fall back on anything."

These, then, are some of the important qualities to seek when you are selecting implementers -- the principal/director as well as the staff.

▶ THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL/DIRECTOR

Usually the principal or the director is hired (or selected from within the planning group) before the staff comes on board and becomes primarily responsible for building the program and the staff's commitment to it. This role is undoubtedly the key one, and Berman and McLaughlin refer to principals as "the gatekeepers of change" in the Rand Study (1977, p. 162). Clearly, if the principal doesn't support the program wholeheartedly, others are less likely to do so.

The principal must provide good planning management and support to the staff. Gross, Giacquinta, and Bernstein (1971) suggest five essential tasks for the principal of a new school:

- Give a clear picture of the new role requirements
- Adjust organizational structure to ensure compatibility with the requirements of the new program
- Provide the necessary retraining experiences for the staff to be able to carry out the new program
- Provide the needed resources for the staff
- Provide appropriate (and much needed) social support and rewards to the staff

In addition, the principal must be committed to the new school program and goals and create effective ways for the staff to work together to make decisions, resolve conflicts, divide work, and so on (p. 201).

Most principals or directors exhibit good management and instructional leadership skills. Often, the critical difference lies in their ability to provide social support to their staff members. For example:

Teachers at Schools 2 and 3 at the Westgate site were asked to respond to several scales developed to measure elementary principals' behavior by Gross and Herriott (1965). While responses did not differ on the managerial and instructional leadership questions, teachers viewed the two principals quite differently on the social support scale. The items appear below:

	School 2	School 3
Displays integrity in behavior		
Always:	*72%*	*16%*
Almost always:	*17%*	*25%*
Puts you at ease when you talk		
Always:	*65%*	*23%*
Almost always:	*17%*	*23%*
Makes those who work together feel inferior		
Never:	*65%*	*26%*
Almost never:	*11%*	*23%*
Rubs people the wrong way		
Never:	*34%*	*2%*
Almost never:	*34%*	*23%*
Shows real interest in your welfare		
Always:	*28%*	*16%*
Almost always:	*11%*	*9%*

In commenting on the Westgate elementary school sites, the researcher noted:

> *It seems likely that the major force contributing to the realization of open education was the [social] support system that developed -- a system that enabled teachers who needed implementation ideas and assistance to get it.*
>
> *In School 2, the principal provided much of this support, the guidance counselor, nurse and media specialist supplemented it, and many teachers gave help to their colleagues.*
>
> *In School 3, which began with fewer experienced and pro-open education teachers, and a number of rooms which did not "require" team planning, the support system was much less well developed. The principal supplied less social support (though his managerial and professional support was very similar to that of the School 2 principal) and because sub-groups developed among the staff, one of which tended to encourage non-implementation of open education by its members.*

Given School 3's fewer experienced and pro-open education teachers, it was the school that most needed a well-developed social support system. School 2 was generally considered to be the school that actually achieved a good implementation of the open space, team teaching program that Westgate attempted.

▶ SELECTION PROCESSES

This section discusses the selection of the principal or director first, and then is followed by some ideas on the selection of the staff. Both processes are affected by what might be called "the attraction phenomenon." This refers to the tendency of both the interviewer(s) and the candidates to look at only the attractive parts of the job: the interviewer presents the job's advantages, salary and fringe benefits, opportunity for advancement, and so forth while the candidate seeks and focuses on that information.

What is likely to be left out, however, are the things that most people don't like to talk about: potential problems, conflicts, difficulties that could arise. The tendency is to rely on good will and a belief that "nothing bad will

happen." The problem with this approach is that everybody enters the new setting with no real sense of what needs to be done, potential pitfalls, ideas for dealing with such issues -- in short, ground rules to go by. Putting one's best foot forward often prevents the anticipation of problem areas that actually are predictable. They then become conflicts because they weren't handled ahead of time.

For example:

> *At Arts Coop, a high school for the arts, the director had a staff of specialists in the various arts. His own field had been writing and theatre, and he took fairly strong stands with teachers in developing these programs. But with the music and visual arts areas, in which he felt less competent and knowledgeable, he gave free rein to teachers in program development. Teachers in writing and theatre felt justifiably jealous and "interfered with," a problem that took a long time to surface and an even longer time to solve.*
>
> *What might have happened if the director had discussed his strong feelings about the two areas and early on raised the notion that this could be an area of potential conflict? One possibility is that some ground rules for dealing with this situation might have been established.*

In the absence of anticipating and discussing how issues might be handled, what usually happens is that the situation drags on until it blows up and tempers flare. This is definitely the hardest time to deal with it.

- SELECTING THE PRINCIPAL.

The selection of the principal or director may well be the most important decision that the planning group will make. In most instances, this selection marks the beginning of the implementation phase. It is also the beginning of the constraint vs. autonomy dilemma (see pages 31-33 in Module 1 of this guide) as well as the point at which ownership, and sometimes authority, is transferred.

The chart on the next page compares the actual steps taken by two particular schools in selecting a principal. Lincoln Acres was planning an open space elementary school which would use team teaching. Arts Coop was to be a regional high school for the arts, which would stress an interdisciplinary approach.

LINCOLN ACRES	ARTS COOP
1. Selection of screening committee (5 teachers & 5 community volunteers)	1. Selection of screening committee (sub-group of planners, including a supt, principal, teacher, artists, student, lay person
2. Supt. selects a leader/facilitator for screening committee	2. Leadership provided by the whole planning group
3. Establishment of qualifications for principal: • Experience • Proper credentials • Ability to understand children • Flexible attitudes • Independence from supt. • Able to offer good advice to teachers and youth	3. Establishment of qualifications for director: • Flexibility • Innovativeness • Creativity • Articulateness • 3 years' experience in administration • Master's plus 30 credits
4. Narrowing field from 50 to 15	4. Narrowing field from 13 to 7
5. Construction of interview questions: • Standard questions such as "Tell us about what you've been doing," and "How is your experience relevant here?"	5. Construction of interview packet, including: • Application • Notice of vacancy • List of qualifications • Outline of format for interview, which included the questions to be asked • Seven 1-paragraph mini-case studies consisting of problem situations
6. Interview procedure: • Rotated leadership for each interview • Each candidate asked to answer the standard questions • Each candidate rated on scale of 1 to 5	6. Interview procedure: • Two hours per interview • Each candidate given a packet and a half hour to review it prior to the interview • Each candidate discussed immediately after interview
7. Narrowing down: • 5 finalists chosen • Visits to their schools to see them in action were made where possible	7. Narrowing down: • Not necessary -- the last candidate interviewed was selected by unanimous vote

Exercise

Beginning on the next page is "SCREENING COMMITTEES," an exercise that asks you to answer questions about the above chart in terms of your own situation. Feedback for several of the questions follows. It will be more convenient for you to work individually, but question 8 should be assigned in advance. "SCREENING COMMITTEES" provides the opportunity to consider and to design your own interviews with candidates.

DO

SCREENING COMMITTEES (45-60 min)

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CHART ON PAGE 48. YOU MAY WORK INDIVIDUALLY, PERHAPS OUTSIDE OF YOUR GROUP, ALTHOUGH QUESTION 8 WILL REQUIRE SOME GROUP COORDINATION. WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED, READ THROUGH THE FEEDBACK ON SOME OF THE QUESTIONS, WHICH FOLLOWS.

YOU MAY WISH TO DISCUSS YOUR WORK WITH OTHERS IN THE GROUP.

1. Compare Lincoln Acres' screening committee to Arts Coop's committee. Describe a possible weakness of the Lincoln Acres committee.

2. Pretend that you are about to hire a principal/director at your school (or a replacement if you already have one). What qualifications from the chart would you recommend? Which ones would you drop or change? What qualifications would you add?

3. Assuming that commitment to the goals of your school (or any school) is an important criterion for selecting a principal or director, how could you make sure that your pool of candidates is formed on this basis?

(Please turn the page.) EXERCISE 5

4. How could you best choose among candidates according to the criterion of commitment (e.g., to your goals)?

5. At the Work Conference on New School Planning and Implementation, a number of other criteria were suggested as important for the selection of a principal. They are listed below. Place a check next to those that might be important in your situation. Discuss how you would gather reliable data on each checked criterion.

	CRITERION	HOW TO ASSESS
___	Group skills	
___	Communication/human relations skills	
___	Planning/organization development skills	
___	Trust-building skills	
___	Sensitivity to supporting groups (especially community, parents)	
___	Ability to deal with unanticipated critical incidents, to turn them around without getting wiped out in the process	

6. Write four questions that you might include in an interview packet for candidates for principal of your school.

7. Mini-case studies were included in the Arts Coop interview packet so interviewers could get a feeling for how candidates might respond to hypothetical situations that a director might have to confront. Here is one of those mini-case studies from Arts Coop:

It seems that one of your faculty members does not have the temperament to deal with students of high school age. There have been many complaints brought against this teacher. However, whenever you observe this person's performance, you come away with a good feeling. How would you approach this teacher and present the complaints you've received?

Do you think this is a good format for a mini-case study? If not, describe how you think case studies could be constructed.

8. Divide up this task so that each group member constructs a mini-case study on one of the following themes:

- Community conflict
- Parental objections
- Resource management
- Staff communication problems
- Student morale
- Accountability/evaluation
- Faculty-student conflict
- Use of consultants

(Please turn the page.)

9. The Arts Coop screening committee gave each candidate a half hour to review the interview packet. Do you think this was a good idea? Why?

10. In many situations, a rating scale such as the one used by Lincoln Acres (1 to 5 for each candidate) is not very sensitive to differences among candidates, especially when a number of criteria are used. Design a more sensitive and reliable rating system.

WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR GROUP:

WHEN YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE ABOVE 10 QUESTIONS AND READ THE FEEDBACK WHICH BEGINS ON THE NEXT PAGE --

- Review your own plan (if you already have established one) for selecting a principal or director :
- Discuss how you might strengthen it on the basis of some of the ideas you generated in answering the questions above

FEEDBACK ON SOME OF THE QUESTIONS IN "SCREENING COMMITTEES"

1. The Lincoln Acres screening committee does not really represent the planning group. Having a faction of stakeholders (teachers, community people) responsible for selecting the principal may produce considerable conflict. Moreover, Lincoln Acres used volunteers from the community rather than people who had been involved in the planning process up until that time. They might have done better by peopling at least half of their screening committee with experienced, invested planning group members.

2. Work Conference participants mentioned such qualifications as charisma, leadership ability, commitment, communication skills, and planning skills. Question 5 provides additional suggestions.

6. Here are some questions asked by the Arts Coop screening committee:

   - *Why are you seeking this position?*
   - *If you were appointed to this position, what underlying philosophy would you promote?*
   - *How would you go about developing programs based on any experiences you have had in this area?*
   - *What would be your plan to evaluate the various arts programs? Who would do the evaluation, and how often?*
   - *How would you proceed to enlist community support, both political and financial?*
   - *What means of staff selection would you employ?*
   - *How would you evaluate staff and how often?*
   - *What function would you expect staff and students to play in decision making?*
   - *What administrative experiences have you had that qualify you for this position?*
   - *What qualifications will you look for in students applying to this school?*
   - *What qualifications will the staff members be required to meet?*

7. It is probably best to construct case studies that use some or all of the following criteria:

   - Most should tie into the goals of the school
   - They should be realistic, if not anticipated events
   - They should be easy to evaluate
   - They should demand specific responses, especially responses that tap knowledge of strategies and skills

8. Here are some of the mini-case studies used by the Arts Coop screening committee:

Assume that one community is sending more students than you can accommodate. They are all good and they have a sincere desire to become part of the school, but you have no room for all of them. How would you go about making the selection? Whom would you consult?

Assuming the above, a parent calls you and is very upset because her daughter was not selected. She wants to know why. She tells you that her daughter is an accomplished pianist and that she wants to be in this arts program.

A dispute develops between you, as director, and one of your staff regarding a certain course of study to be followed. Before hiring this teacher, you had explained that all staff would have to follow the program format. But once hired, this particular teacher discarded the interdisciplinary course outline that was to be used. Reports coming to you from other staff members are disturbing. What are you going to do in this case?

It has come to your attention that a student from one of the participating towns is constantly absent. Supposedly, he leaves his regular school to come to Arts Coop for the afternoon, but he's not attending your classes. His parents were unaware of his absence from Arts Coop classes until you contacted them. Inquiries with other students are of no help to you. What procedures would you use to follow this up?

9. Here is a comment made by an observer concerning the usefulness of the half hour review period for candidates:

This assured an interview which would give the screeners the information they wanted, and it also served to give the candidate a first taste of what the planners felt the school should and would be like. Thus, it began the most crucial and elusive part of the planning/implementation linkage, the real transfer from the heads of the planners to the heads of the implementers.

10. A common method for constructing an interview rating scale is to rank and assign a weight to each of the criteria. Each candidate then can be given a score (e.g., 1 to 5) on each criterion. A total score for each criterion is computed by multiplying the weight by the individual score. An overall total is the sum of the totals for the criteria. Note that a weight of 4 for a given criterion vs. a weight of 2 means that one criterion is twice as important as the other.

- SELECTING THE STAFF.

Schools with no externally imposed constraints on the selection of staff are rare. Most schools face union regulations, budget constraints, mandates for selecting from within the district, "excessed" teachers from other parts of the system, and often, all of the above.

Nevertheless, the premise that innovative goals are not worth anything unless and until a dedicated and experienced staff translates them into practice is one that is uppermost in the minds of planners. In this age of cutbacks and crises, staff openings in education are few and far between. Distinguishing between people who are committed to the new-school goals and those who are hungry is a difficult task.

The advantage usually associated with a "buyers market" can be outweighed by the dangers of misrepresentation. At worst, people will profess to anything to secure a position. At best, you can expect candidates to apply because the new school represents a chance to move out of a monotonous or unchallenging position. Some of the latter individuals may well make good candidates for your school despite the frustrations they have been through. Others will bring their source of dissatisfaction with them.

At the Lincoln Acres open space elementary school:

An over-riding constraint for hiring staff was that teachers had to be selected from within the district because enrollments in some schools were shrinking, and unless they were transferred to another school, some teachers would have to be fired. Potential teachers for the new school were identified through an announcement that asked anyone interested in transferring to write a letter to the superintendent saying so. In a preliminary meeting in the fall, the new principal met with 30 teachers who showed interest in joining the new-school staff. By January 10, there were only 18 actual letters requesting transfers. By February 1, all instructional staff, except for music, art and physical education teachers, had been selected by the principal for the September start-up.

The principal was satisfied with the staff, but he felt that he might have assembled a better one if he had been able to recruit outside of the district.

For Arts Coop, the half-day arts program drawing students from several school districts, a different problem prevailed -- finding people interested in only part-time work:

> *Preparing for a February start-up, the new director began in the fall to gather dozens of suggestions for staff. He activated every contact in his network who might be able to provide names for staff and guidance for program development. He used planning committee members, state university faculty, department of education specialists, people from the Arts Commission and other arts organizations, arts schools in the area, local art contacts from the meetings held by the planners, and friends from Northtown and the nearby city. Artists recommended each other if they themselves were not available or interested. It was an arduous process. Time was short and dead ends were frequent. The director lamented:*
>
> > *There hasn't been time to work out the staff ingredient by ingredient. Instead, I've had to throw it all into the pot at once, and hope that it comes out.*
>
> *By January, the director had the staff with which he would open the school.*

At Lincoln Acres, it was the principal who had sole responsibility for selecting staff within the confines of a district pool of candidates. At Arts Coop, although the director took main responsibility for staff selection, he did give his main music person control over the selection of the rest of the music staff.

Both the principal and the director used the interview as a means of selection. But, in addition the Lincoln Acres principal relied heavily upon visits to his candidates' classrooms to observe them in action. He visited several times to be sure that he got an accurate reading of the instructional methods and personal styles used by each candidate.

The Arts Coop director mostly relied on his impressions from the interviews and recommendations from those whose opinions he trusted. In one case, however, he wavered back and forth, not sure if a painter/visual arts teacher was the person he wanted for the program. He invited her to participate in staff meetings and student auditions, thus getting a better sense of her fit with the program, before he finally decided to hire her.

While it may seem obvious, it bears repeating that a close match between the goals for the new school and the skills, experiences, and styles of staff members is essential. Otherwise, much time (perhaps futilely) will be spent in trying to fabricate a match or, sadly, giving in to the forces that push for goal revision or even abandonment.

Establishing criteria for staff that fit with the goals for the new school is a helpful aid. Below is a chart listing the goals and the criteria established by the principal of Lincoln Acres to aid him in selecting appropriate staff for the open space elementary school.

GOALS	STAFF SELECTION CRITERIA
1. Team teaching	1. Experience at particular grade levels, yet equipped for a multitude of levels (e.g., grades 1,2,3)
2. Using open-space architecture effectively	2. Previous experience with team teaching
3. Multi-age groupings of children	3. Previous experience in using the classroom in an open way
4. Individualization of instruction	4. Past teaching that allows students to develop independence and responsibility
5. Comprehensive record-keeping system	5. Typical style that permits a lot of social interaction in the classroom
	6. Experience in dealing with parents who are critical of the school and in working with parent volunteers
	7. Some indication of working with children in a socially constructive way
	8. Effective classroom management
	9. Familiarity with curriculum

Clearly, a good match exists between the goals and staff selection criteria used by the Lincoln Acres principal. Note that the chart includes criteria that imply that the principal had considered possible future conflicts (e.g., classroom management and parent involvement problems) in assessing staff needs.

Exercise

On the next page is "CRITERIA CHART," a short exercise in which you complete a goals-staff selection criteria chart for your own school. If you have already selected your staff, you might wish to complete the chart with an eye towards replacing staff as they leave the school.

You may do the exercise individually or in your group. In any case, compare your ideas with those of others. Note also that even if you are planners and will turn over selection responsibilities to the principal/director or to a group consisting of the principal/director plus others with a stake in the selection process, these criteria will be most helpful to whoever is making the decisions.

DO

CRITERIA CHART

(20-30 min)

Complete the chart below for your school, first listing the goals that have been established for the new school and then the related criteria for staff selection that will support the attainment of those goals. You may work individually or as a group, but sharing your ideas when you have finished will be helpful.

GOALS	STAFF SELECTION CRITERIA

EXERCISE 6

HOW CAN WE BUILD A GOOD STAFF TEAM?

Usually, in the process of creating a new school, most implementers get caught up in the enthusiasm, excitement, even the sense of mission, associated with the notion of building something completely new, and presumably different from whatever else already exists. Seldom do people think of the task of creating a new school as a set of developmental problems to be identified, considered, and resolved.

Choosing and forming a group of people particularly suited to the task, orienting them to it, anticipating problems and developing some problem-solving mechanisms, and creating a system for ongoing growth and development are especially crucial and, correspondingly, most difficult to accomplish.

Instead, the pull is toward getting started, which often results in avoiding or glossing over seemingly unimportant activities (such as orientation) and potential problem areas: "Oh, we'll deal with that if (when) it comes up..." There's no real reason for people to rely upon good luck and hope for the best to help them over the hurdles of reality, and yet, that's exactly what happens.

What IS predictable is that (1) there will be conflict between the principal/director and the staff, and (2) there will be conflict between staff members.

This part of Module 2 deals with orienting and socializing people into the new school setting, some group skills they will need (briefly), and staff development.

▶ ORIENTATION AND SOCIALIZATION

It is hard to build a working, trusting staff. People will be coming from different experiences and will have very different points of view. Some will buy into the new-school goals and vision from the start; others will take longer to become supportive; still others may never fully own them.

As people are brought on board, it is especially important to provide them with a thorough grounding in what the new school is all about, its history, goals, vision of how the future should look, how they'll work together.

Participants who have already been involved (e.g., the planners, the principal/director) may have forgotten what it is like to be new and what they didn't know then that they know now. They've already developed a common language and have a certain savvy about the environment. New people must be brought up to date on how things began and the history of the new-school work up to the point of their entry.

Although staff are usually given some orientation in their interviews for the positions and often receive some background information emphasizing the goals and implementation concerns, typically it is not enough. Staff members are likely to have their own strong beliefs about what children need and how to go about school operations. Their ideas are not always congruent with the planners' and principal/director's notions, as was observed at Arts Coop:

> *There was little money to spend on ironing out the differences of opinion or on inculcating the artists (teachers) with the values of the planners. The several all-staff meetings held during the pre-operational period only began to reveal the variety of approaches and disagreements which existed.*
>
> *The staff was naturally more concerned with the pressure of imminent opening than with the details of the planning history. The director served as the main interpreter and planning/implementation link, but it was not always clear to the staff that he was in fact carrying around mandates from the planners (which he too owned, by the way) as he developed plans for implementation.*
>
> *As a result, the director was often in the position of pushing for certain decisions, and finally making them unilaterally, because staff disagreement did not necessarily take into account necessary carry-over from the planning to the implementation.*

A good way to start off a staff training program is with a strong orientation to what the new school planning and history look like and how they came to be. This orientation and socialization process may be carried out orally (as in a workshop setting where planners present their ideas) or in writing (perhaps as a reading assignment before a first meeting of the staff). This process is made a whole lot easier, of course, if planners have kept good records of their work through running records, documentation, logs or journals, tapes of critical meetings, and so on.

The socialization process can be aided, also, by finding out what teachers' hopes and expectations are for the new school and the roles they will play in it. An Expectations Questionnaire was administered at the second staff meeting of the Lincoln Acres open space elementary school. Listed below are some questions and typical responses:

LINCOLN ACRES STAFF EXPECTATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. AS BRIEFLY AS POSSIBLE DESCRIBE SOME OF THE ASPECTS OF BEING ON THE STAFF OF THE LINCOLN ACRES SCHOOL THAT YOU ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO.

Working in teams, building an esprit de corps.
Helping to create a new school without the problems of a given structure.
Opportunity to work with (names of particular people).

2. WHAT DO YOU EXPECT THE NEW SCHOOL TO BE LIKE?

Making education enjoyable.
Flexibility.
Educational growth.
A community-like environment.

3. DO YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS OR WORRIES ABOUT WHAT LIFE WILL BE LIKE IN THE NEW SCHOOL? IF SO, WHAT ARE THEY?

A kindergarten teacher whose class was self-contained worried about being cut off from the rest of the school.
The building is ugly and without enough windows.
Possible disruptive effects of noise and other distractions as a result of open space.

4. CONSIDERING YOUR OWN TEACHING, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO IN THE NEW SCHOOL THAT YOU'RE NOT DOING NOW?

Team teach--share the planning, teaching, and experiences.
Meet student needs--help individuals, give full attention to one child or a group without worrying about supervising the rest of the class.
Grow professionally--receive more help in becoming a better teacher; have a more open, supportive principal.

5. AS BRIEFLY AS POSSIBLE DESCRIBE WHAT YOU WOULD CONSIDER TO BE THE IDEAL STATE OF EDUCATION TAKING PLACE IN THE LINCOLN ACRES SCHOOL FIVE YEARS FROM NOW.

Individualized instruction.
Community and parental participation.
Open and informal school environment.

6. WHAT PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL GOALS DO YOU HAVE THAT YOU HOPE TO REALIZE IN THE LINCOLN ACRES SCHOOL?

Better understanding of kids, how they grown and learn.
Develop ability to provide alternative educational experiences for children.
Understand group dynamics.
Become an educational leader.

7. WHAT PRACTICAL PROBLEMS DO YOU EXPECT WILL BE OF MOST CONCERN DURING THE FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION?

Not enough time to do everything.
Not knowing where to go to find answers to problems.
Individualizing, interacting with other areas, teaming.
Clarifying roles, not being overcome by others on team.
Getting parents and kids comfortable with open space.

Learning what staff expectations and hopes are is a good way to find out what staff training areas are most relevant and needed. Exercises that help staff members to get to know each other will be useful for a long time to come. Such questions as these should be addressed:

- What are the different hopes, expectations, assumptions, skills, resources, and work styles that each bring to the staff, and how will they affect staff functioning?
- What are the similarities among staff members?
- What motivations do members have for joining the staff?
- How can the staff best use members' skills and resources?

These questions focus on a participatory, teaming model, which may or may not be relevant to your new school. If they are and you wish to try a related group exercise, see GUIDE 1: SETTING THE STAGE FOR PLANNING, where Exercise 2, "GROUP VITA," on page 23, deals with these issues.

Exercise

On the next page is space for you to make up your own "EXPECTATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE" for your staff. Refer to the Lincoln Acres example if you need ideas.

Consider when and how you might use such a questionnaire with your staff, and how to use the responses.

EXPECTATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE (1 hr)

Develop an open-ended expectations questionnaire in which you ask the staff of the new school to write in their responses.

Consider when and how to use the questionnaire with the staff. Also, how can you use the responses? Ex: If the questionnaire is used to kick off a training session, you might collect the responses on newsprint, sort the major themes, and plan the focus(es) of the following sessions according to the priorities established, particularly if a number of people express the same fears, worries, etc.

(Use the other side of page for notes.) EXERCISE 7

▶ GROUP SKILLS

Three major skill areas that an effective staff must develop include: Decision making, problem solving, and communicating information. These areas are treated in turn below, but briefly.

• DECISION MAKING.

Much of the literature states that a decision-making structure that allows for maximum participation, good communication about decisions, and real agreement and ownership of decisions produces the best outcomes and more involved and dedicated participants.

There are many models of decision making, and some are more appropriate than others for your particular situation. For example, a top-down, directive model may be more comfortable in a school setting than a participatory, consensus one. What is important is that participants be clear on how decisions are to be made, who is to be included, and when a decision has in fact been made.

A detailed treatment of methods of decision making, ranging from "plop" decisions through "majority vote" to "consensus" methods, can be found in GUIDE 1: SETTING THE STAGE FOR PLANNING, on pages 32-43.

Who has the right or need to make what kinds of decisions? In deciding who needs to be included, there are two major considerations: The type of decision at stake and representation. A policy decision obviously needs to be made at a policy level, with full participation by all component system representatives. It may also involve the participation of lower levels of participants, to insure that the policy is based on fair and sensible assumptions about how the policy can be implemented.

But a procedural or scheduling decision, such as setting a time for a meeting, may involve only those participants directly affected by the action.

Representation in decisions is clearly connected to assuring collaboration. Developing a decision-making structure that accounts for this will accomplish three things:

- Gives some assurance that decisions have legitimacy and will not be unmade by someone else later on
- Makes certain that all whose views are important in an area are included in decisions about it
- Protects one component or another from abuses

In deciding who needs to be represented, consider not only who is directly involved at this moment but try to envision the future and who will have to be involved if a particular feature or program is put into place.

How do you know when a decision is made? Given the newness of your school, it is advisable not to come to a closure too quickly on a decision or to assume that once made, a decision is carved in stone, unchangeable, even when it makes sense to change it.

But you need a way to determine when a decision is final. Sometimes it helps to set a time limit on a decision; it will be tried out for a period of time and then re-assessed for its workability. Other times, a final decision must be made, and it should be stated as such.

Issues of leadership and participatory decision making. The following is a summary from the Work Conference on Problems of Creating New Schools. A group composed of seven representatives from new schools listed the following considerations from their discussion:

REASONS FOR USING A POPULIST, PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY LEADERSHIP STYLE IN NEW SCHOOLS (these were both claimed and disputed):

New schools require greater energy to implement, so participatory styles are needed to heighten commitment, ownership, and delivery.

Participatory styles lead to greater morale.

Teachers need the right to fail, the right to learn (partly so they can model this to children); therefore, leadership style should emphasize teacher input. Also, teacher collaboration is needed if they are to be more collaborative with students.

SOME TYPICAL STRAINS OF A PARTICIPATORY STYLE:

Surfacing genuine concerns and issues that people have, not pooh-poohing them.

Making real constraints clear to those involved in the decision making.

Clarifying what consensus is: Is it "watered down" compromise, unanimity, or a decision that we all go along with and won't sabotage? Or, something nobody cares about enough either to energize or oppose?

Working with core group without generating jealousy and mistrust from those not in the core.

Going out of your way to be open and being misperceived as being closed and having already made the decision. Promising an open agenda but not being believed. Cynicism, disbelief stemming from past experience with pre-made decisions, political pressures, process of gaining consent, etc.

Difficulty in explaining external political realities to staff (often prima donnas, naive, emotionally involved) who expect leader to change the world rather than maneuvering through it. Problems of being open internally, but closed in dealing with external political issues.

PSEUDO-PARTICIPATION:

Leaders may embrace a participative philosophy, but reserve an elite role in practice. Shows up in words like, "how do we involve them?"

Participation may be invited when leader does in fact have predetermined solutions or decisions in mind.

Leaders may slip into trying to please everybody, abdicating own initiative.

Elaborate schemes for participation may only end with vetoing, frustration.

Participatory models may ignore fact of conflict, differing motivations, agendas and constituencies.

PRESSURES IN SCHOOLS MOVING THEM TOWARD AUTHORITARIAN STYLES OF LEADERSHIP:

Teachers' definition of selves as isolated, autonomous professionals (won't make collaborative decisions with colleagues, have autonomy within their classrooms; "no one knows the kids like I do, and I'm accountable.") They look to outside leadership and simultaneously say, "you don't know what you're talking about."

Accountability to boards, authoritarian tradition.

Rule orientation of schools encourages teacher dependency.

THE META-ISSUE: WHO WILL DECIDE HOW THINGS GET DECIDED?

Leader may be genuinely participatory, but has reserved the elite right to decide that that method will be used.

"The most important decision you make as a leader is how to make the decision: That's the only decision you really need full and complete consensus on."

Participatory decision making often goes by the name of consensus, which is based on the idea that full agreement on a decision is preferable to a majority vote. All participants must agree to a decision; the staff cannot take action on decisions that are rejected by one of them. One does not own a decision that one has voted against.

Arriving at consensus requires touching all bases, making sure all interested parties understand the issue and approve of the proposed action. This can be a very painstaking process, particularly when there is initial disagreement that must somehow be resolved. But this process itself has its own value. Building consensus is a way of including people, who may also be possible passive resisters. Participating in the process creates its own ownership.

It is often mistakenly assumed that consensus requires unanimity, and that people must be made to adjust to the offered solution. An alternative to the unanimity model is a technique called solution shaping. This method avoids shaping people and thus frees them to work on shaping the solution. People don't get changed; instead, the solution itself gets bent until it meets everyone's needs.

Exercise

By reading and then doing the exercise, "SOLUTION SHAPING," on the next page, you will see what the solution-shaping process looks and feels like in action.

The exercise should be done by the group.

SOLUTION SHAPING (time varies)

Select an issue or a problem which requires a group decision for action to be taken.

Group members should know in advance that the goal is an agreed-upon solution and that the object is to work on shaping the solution to accommodate as many needs as possible.

Then follow these steps:

1. Someone proposes a solution.
2. Test it by polling members to find out who doesn't like it.
3. Shape it by asking how it could be fixed to meet people's expectations.
4. Test again with another polling.
5. Reshape accordingly.
6. Retest.

-

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N. Solution is agreeable to everyone.

EXERCISE 8

- PROBLEM SOLVING.

There are numerous models and much research available on how groups solve problems. (For example, see GUIDE 3: MAPPING YOUR SCHOOL'S ENVIRONMENT, pages 47-50. Also, see the RESOURCES section of this guide.)

The issue is that you have a large machine to coordinate and you need to consider alternative solutions and strategies without excessive energy or time commitments.

One method is to use force field analysis as a technique for identifying factors that keep you from being where you want to be, and those that might be supportive if you could bolster them. Then, you can examine whether or not it's worth investing the energy it would take to improve the situation. Sometimes you can change something if you want to, but it's just not worth the energy. You have to consider priorities about the use of your energy.

Another problem-solving method lists seven steps:

- Defining the problem. Stating the problem.
- Collecting information.
- Getting ideas, exploring alternatives.
- Testing ideas and alternatives.
- Deciding on solutions.
- Planning action to carry out the solutions.
- Checking the effects of your action. Following up.

Problem solving depends on a certain systematic approach to the problems at hand. It also depends on an effective level of group functioning.*

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* For further reference, see Schmuck et al, Second Handbook of Organizational Development in Schools. Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield Press, 1972. Revised edition, 1977.

Exercise

It may be useful for you to analyze the process of problem solving that is (or may be) common to your staff. The exercise on the next page, "A LOOK AT YOUR PROBLEM SOLVING," will help you to do that.

Your whole group should do this exercise. Appoint a facilitator to keep people on task and to use your time efficiently.

DO

A LOOK AT YOUR PROBLEM SOLVING (60-90 min)

1. Look at the problem-solving process as it typically exists in your school. Do it on a step-by-step basis. Use a big newsprint chart like the one below.
2. For each step, list typical member actions which contribute to the process at each step.
3. List the blocks or barriers -- what is slowing down the problem-solving at each step?
4. Suggest methods that will help the group overcome the blocks.

STEPS	ACTIONS	BLOCKS	METHODS
Problem definition			
Collecting data			
Getting ideas			
Testing ideas			
Deciding			
Planning to do			
Checking effects			

SUGGESTION: Don't feel you need to fill in every box. Concentrate on the steps where you think you need improvement.

EXERCISE 9

- COMMUNICATING INFORMATION.

Some decisions have to be made concerning how much information people need and want. These decisions will be based on:

- Political considerations. Controlling access to information is a means of maintaining power and control. The less information someone has, the less power s/he is able to assume in a situation.

- Substantive considerations. Who needs what kind of information to do his/her job well?

- Personal considerations. Do some people have to have the larger context and reasoning provided so that they can be effective? Do some people only want to know what they have to know, and not be burdened with additional worries and concerns?

In the final analysis, amount of and access to information will be related more to the informal network (friends, cliques) which develops, and the level of trust within the group(s). Even with a formal communication system which supports openness and sharing of information, if trust is lacking, people will be guarded and defensive about the information they give out.

Remember that: NOTHING BREEDS DISTRUST LIKE THE FEELING OF BEING KEPT IN THE DARK.

Information can be communicated formally or informally by:

- Meetings -- regular and as needed
- Memoranda
- School newsletter
- Active, personal communication

With the multitude of activities going on in the school, it is very easy for each part to isolate itself from the others so that it can neither benefit from, aid nor coordinate with the larger school picture.

Even within each area of the program, it is too easy not to share information which could be extremely helpful either as background or as integral considerations to a part of the planning/implementation process.

Besides, sharing information regularly enhances that new-school implementer feeling of "we're all in this together."

Though school people are strong in program content, they tend to have limited awareness of and skills in process. Said one planner:

> *Often school people have resistance to reflection and developing group skills. One way of handling this resistance is to emphasize the time-saving aspect of a properly functioning group. But you still have the implementers' drive to contend with -- the drive to get right into the cookbook and skip the process.*

Optimally, "good" functioning should involve (1) being aware of what's happening, and (2) making explicit choices about the processes to use in various situations.

For a detailed treatment of group functioning, including group climate and norms, use of time at meetings, members' differences, and managing conflicts, see GUIDE 1: SETTING THE STAGE FOR PLANNING, pages 15-31.

▶ STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Presenting an articulate and complete plan for school operation helps to insure the occurrence of an implementation that is linked to and congruent with the goals and vision. An inarticulate and incomplete plan can go astray, resulting in the implementation of some unspecified "plan." On the other hand, both overplanning and underplanning can alienate a staff.

The usual emphasis of a staff training program is placed on preparation of the setting and provision of services to children. What is de-emphasized (or sometimes totally ignored) is the opportunity for professional and personal growth that staff training can offer. This slighting or omission of one of the strongest motivators known to humankind -- personal benefits and gains -- undercuts the effects of the training program.

A second difficulty plaguing staff training programs (as in planning) is the conflict between the desire to try innovative techniques and the need to avoid risks, reduce uncertainty, and limit insecurity on the part of participants.

Related to this problem is people's lack of honesty about their own deficiencies and failure to consider alternative approaches. People tend to be unwilling to admit they have

something to learn. It's a human problem that will compound the failure. Unfortunately, staff training programs are often viewed as remedial programs for teachers, attempts to bring them up to par -- in other words implicit statements that teachers are deficient -- rather than the opportunity for professional and personal growth that they can be.

- TWO POINTS TO CLARIFY.

At the outset of a staff development program, two points should be identified and clarified: Administrative commitment and new-school limitations.

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITMENT to the new school and to the staff development program should be emphasized if the staff members themselves are to take it seriously. For example:

> *A significant commitment on the part of the school system to the new City-Wide High School can be inferred from the release of eight or nine persons for a full semester prior to opening of the new school. These persons were to be teachers in the school and their assignment during the semester was to visit alternative schools in Philadelphia, New York, and Chicago (models for City-Wide), attend workshops on schools-without-walls, plan the program in greater detail, and write curricula for their own subject matter specialties.**

In addition to the above-described financial evidence of commitment, administrators can indicate their commitment to the training program by their own participation in it. Such participation is especially crucial for principals, not only to indicate their support to teachers, but also because their own roles as principals or directors of new schools may change -- they might learn something too!

NEW-SCHOOL LIMITATIONS must be clearly identified for the staff (the principal/director too) if they are to have a realistic sense of what is and isn't possible to accomplish. The school's newness and innovativeness can only produce so much. To expect more is certain to lead to frustration, bitterness, disappointment, and burn-out. Of course, this

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* See Kritek, William J., "The design and implementation of an alternative high school." Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin, 1976. Paper presented at American Educational Research Association meetings, San Francisco, April, 1976.

expectation level must be set carefully, so as not to tax the staff too much and, at the same time, not to under-challenge them.

- SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK.

Listed below are several questions to ask as you plan for staff development. They are not exhaustive, but they are critical.

WHAT IN THE NEW-SCHOOL DESIGN AND GOALS DO STAFF HAVE TO UNDERSTAND -- AND OWN -- BEFORE THEY CAN BENEFIT MOST FULLY FROM THE STAFF TRAINING?

Whatever these things turn out to be, do them first so that you set the stage for training and staff members have a clear understanding of why program components are as they are. For example:

At Julius Appelbaum High, the school for business careers, several innovations were laid out in detail at their 15-day summer institute, including modular scheduling, independent study, on-the-job training placements for students, and identification of resources at the local firms.

But, it was doubtful that the staff understood the rationale for those innovations which they did "adopt" since none was given by the administration. For example, two days after the presentation on modular scheduling, a teacher finally summoned up the courage to ask in a general session, "Why is it better to have modular scheduling?" The brief answer said nothing about the flexibility possibilities. And again: A department supervisor had no idea why class sessions were 36 and 45 minutes on alternate days. "Why didn't they make it an even 40 minutes?" inquired a teacher in her department. "I don't know," replied the supervisor, "they want to be innovative."

Thus, a superficial commitment to these practices resulted from the failure to convey effectively any rationale for them. What was carried over from planning was the mechanics, not the meaning, of an innovation. Teachers were not imbued with the original vision but simply informed about operating procedures and expected to comply.

WHAT DO PEOPLE HAVE TO DO IN THEIR NEW ROLES?

Typically, staff training devotes precious little time to the practical, day-to-day activities of teachers in the new school (or program). When people are asked to do something new and different (for them), they need a lot of exposure to what's expected, how it looks, how it works, what can go wrong, etc. For example:

> *At the Westgate site, where team teaching and open space were being introduced at the elementary levels, an inservice workshop on cooperative teaching was offered by teachers with ten years of team teaching experience. But the session was composed of a string of assertions, with little chance for teachers to plan or try out things for themselves, and which, in the midst of all the newness had very little meaning for the teachers. The presenters said such things as:*
>
> > *The sound in the open space will be minimal.... The super strength of team teaching is that you can learn from each other....The kids seem to get along better....There are two other teachers to cover for you, you don't have to worry about discipline...Everybody teaches all subjects... The personality compatibility of the team is crucial....In the planning you have to look at the entire year and you have to look at the week ahead....Kids develop an awful lot of independence....Teaching aides are invaluable, you can't run team teaching without them.*
>
> *These statements served more to confuse and frighten the new teachers than it did to teach them the nuts and bolts of what they'd be doing.*
>
> *The researcher writes: "The use of experienced team teachers was in one sense practical and reassuring. But like most experts they had streamlined their understanding of their work so much that they did not seem to be able to elicit, or to speak very directly to, the concerns the Westgate teachers had."*

Ask yourself, "If I were a teacher in this new school, what help would I want?" Better yet, ask teachers beforehand what their needs and priorities are so you can address them!

In addition, consider what the space will look like in the new school. If possible, conduct training in the actual space or, at least, <u>plan</u> a session on space and its use.

WHAT HAS TO BE PLANNED/PREPARED IMMEDIATELY AND WHAT CAN BE HELD OFF FOR A LATER TIME?

Do the short-range planning and preparation now, e.g., start-up planning. And, give an overview of long-range plans and related staff training that will be worked on later. This provides staff members with an overall view of the program and its support system -- a context in which they can see themselves.

WHAT IS THE GAP BETWEEN THE IDEALLY PREPARED STAFF AND THE ACTUAL SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE OF THE STAFF?

Figure out what kind of and how much training will be needed to close that gap. How much training time will be needed? The most typical mistake that new-school planners and implementers make is to give insufficient attention to the staff training program and to leave too little time for what inservice training they do provide.

WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU HAVE TO WORK WITH? WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU STILL NEED?

These resources may be material (money, materials, space) and human (consultants). You will want to pull as many of them together as you can, attract more, and use them wisely for the benefit of the staff participants.

See GUIDE 3: MAPPING YOUR SCHOOL'S ENVIRONMENT for strategies on acquiring resources. See GUIDE 1: SETTING THE STAGE FOR PLANNING for a treatment of choosing and using consultants.

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAFF FEEDBACK CAN YOU BUILD INTO YOUR DESIGN FOR THE STAFF TRAINING PROGRAM?

The purpose of the staff training is to meet the needs of the staff in relation to the new-school goals and vision. You'll need to find out if the training components are or are not meeting staff needs. And, if not, how can the training experiences be improved, expanded, revised, or cut back in order to do so?

One way to do this is to have a feedback session after each training experience in which participants critique the usefulness of it. This may be verbal or written. It is absolutely essential, however, that the staff's feedback be heard and heeded. Otherwise, this empty exercise will give rise to considerable anger, bitterness, or shoulder-shrugging apathy.

HOW WILL YOU BUILD AN ONGOING STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM?

The new-school staff and program will benefit from an ongoing approach to staff development, one that enhances their professional and personal growth, refreshes their skills, provides for peer diagnosis and aid with problems, and supports viable solution shaping.

Time, financial and emotional support, and human resources will be needed. Perpetuating initial commitment and adapting it to changing circumstances will be important. Some ways of building an ongoing staff development program are:

- Provide a budget line for staff development activities
- Establish a permanent steering committee to plan and review staff development activities
- Set up structure for getting data on staff needs
- Use a detached observer to help lay out changing circumstances, options for dealing with them, and benefits/costs
- Provide for orientation and socialization of later, new staff by integrating them with pioneering staff
- Set up an "each one teach one" peer help program
- Maintain atmosphere of enthusiasm for new learning
- Reward staff for initiative in development activities
- Regularly publicize success of staff development program

Said one Westgate planner, who was emphasizing open space and team teaching:

> *Until six months ago, I [he's the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction] thought that inservice training would just stop when school opens, and I now realize that the first two years are when you work out the problems.*
>
> *Ken [the Director of Elementary Instruction] and I need help and expertise on changing attitudes... something like Mike [a consultant on the building structure] did with the physical architecture, but with the social architecture instead.*

Exercise

On the next page is "STAFF TRAINING MENU," an exercise which provides topics and formats for planning for staff training. The "menu" consists of possible topics and needs in Column A and possible formats for addressing them in Column B.

Instructions for doing the exercise are as follows:

- Go over the list and place a check next to each item in Column A that you would like to see covered in the staff training program at your school.
- Add additional topics at the bottom of Column A.
- Link topics to formats by drawing arrows from the checked topics in Column A to the appropriate formats in Column B.
- Feel free to clarify, add to, or elaborate on the formats listed in Column B.
- For each link, make a note regarding who might take responsibility for the training or discussion. You might select from the following list:
    - Planning group
    - Principal/director
    - Cabinet of key people (team leaders, assistant principals, etc.)
    - Group of teachers
    - Consultants

You can do this exercise as a group or individually. If you need more space, consider transferring the columns to newsprint (especially if you work as a group).

When you complete "STAFF TRAINING MENU," you will have a good start on planning for staff training. The next step will be to set it into motion.

DO

STAFF TRAINING MENU

(1-1½ hrs)

See the instructions for this exercise on page 84.

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
1. HUMAN RELATIONS SKILLS a. Communication b. Group skills c. Team building d. Trust building e. Conflict management f. Leadership g. Problem solving 2. ORGANIZATIONAL CONCERNS a. Staff structure b. Governance c. Decision-making procedure d. Role descriptions e. School policies and rules f. Team composition g. Grade reporting procedures 3. CURRICULAR CONCERNS a. Lesson plans b. Student performance objectives c. Innovative techniques d. New uses of space e. Curriculum development f. Curriculum materials, resources 4. GOAL CLARIFICATION a. Building an educational philosophy b. Goal setting c. Matching innovative techniques with original goals and vision 5. RELATIONSHIPS WITH CLIENTS a. Relationships with parents b. Introducing parents to the school c. Deciding how and when community will be involved d. Introducing students to the school e. Relationships with school district f. Political strategies	A. STAFF MEETINGS 1. Data gathering 2. Diagnostic 3. Decision making 4. Action planning 5. Feedback B. COMMITTEES 1. Task forces on short-term topics 2. Ongoing committees C. WORKSHOPS 1. "Retreat" weekends, concentrated 2. Series of one-day events D. PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES 1. In the classroom 2. In groups, meetings 3. In outside settings (e.g., district, community) E. EXERCISES (simulated, or real-life) 1. In groups 2. Individually F. PLANNING OPPORTUNITIES 1. Individually 2. In groups G. VISITS TO OTHER SCHOOLS, UNIVERSITIES, COMMUNITY AGENCIES, ETC. H. SPEAKERS, CONSULTANTS, PERSONS DOING DEMONSTRATIONS IN CLASS, ETC. I. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS 1. Reports, articles 2. Memoranda 3. Minutes of meetings J. BUILDING A LIBRARY TO SUPPORT THE INNOVATIONS K. FILMS TO SUPPORT INNOVATIONS L. EXPLORATION OPPORTUNITIES 1. Writing curricula 2. Gathering materials 3. Finding resources

EXERCISE 10

HOW CAN WE PLAN A GOOD SCHOOL START-UP?

Start-ups seem to bring out the worst (and the best) in the people responsible for getting things going. Typically, there is a tremendous overload due to the burdens of newness, little in the way of established roles and ways of interacting, and no real linkages to the students and parents yet. This overload is exacerbated by always underestimating the amount of time needed and a much greater need for support, which is not always forthcoming during such a critical time.

During the start-up period, implementers are acutely aware of their difficulties and thus may be much more open to suggestions than their counterparts in already established schools tend to be. The irony, though, is that in the rush and confusion of start-up, there is little time to experiment with new ways of doing things and so, people are more likely to rely on ways they know best, even when they know there might be more effective methods available.

The start-up operation has been likened to a war-time battle situation, as compared with normal, peace-time conditions,* in that the time pressure, crisis decision making, stress on individuals, lack of structure, and communication difficulties exist in both. The attempt to put systems in place and to create order and clarity under these stressful conditions generally causes people to close up -- they narrow their perceptions, decrease their levels of problem solving, collaboration, and overall time perspectives, and as stress heightens, they avoid responsibility, engage in more purposeless activity, and withdraw from the source of pressures (e.g., taking off sick, etc.).

At the Westgate site, which had a start-up date of September, the staff apparently were still in a state of stress in November and December. The school nurse reported:

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* Harrison, Roger, "Effective organization for start-up." Berkeley: Situation Management Systems, Inc., 1970. A working paper presented to Program for Specialists in Organization Development, NTL, Bethel, Maine, July, 1970.

Medically, the teachers are a wreck. There are more backaches, stomachaches, and hives here than in any other school in the district. Some teachers are taking tranquilizers before they come in the morning.

The school nurse also found from her records that the children's complaints of headaches, eye strain, and other vague symptoms had also increased: Instead of the expected 30 or so visits a month, she noted 88 referrals in two September weeks, 162 in October, and 155 in November.

The researcher states: "It seems likely that the teachers' stress in building a coherent open-space program, and the fact that they were getting minimal support and training, was diffusing to children too."

This example of the Westgate experience in one area (health) points to some possible effects of start-up stress as well as the need for support and training. Roger Harrison has noted:

> The single most important variable in determining the success and effectiveness of the human organization (as opposed to the technical system) is how long in advance of the start-up the people are brought on board for training and team building.*

Start-up usually is viewed as opening the school. Thus, once the students have arrived and classes have begun, the tendency is to think that that's it. We've done it. But in actuality, start-up is the creation of a whole new way of doing things, so after the first two or three days of new-school operation (which generally go very well because the entry of students is planned carefully and the traditional bag of tricks can be called into play, if needed), the system bugs have to be worked out. People have to break in their new roles until they feel comfortable and "right." Otherwise, suffering, as described above, increases dramatically.

Most new-school implementers don't know what they're in for. The need for support will be at an all-time high. Role clarity will be critical. A sense of freedom from having to be perfect, and therefore knowledge that there will be

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* Harrison, Roger, "Prescriptions for organization start-up." Berkeley: Situation Management Systems, Inc., 1978. Paper presented at OD Network Meetings, Portland, Oregon, October, 1978.

problems and that that's normal, should prevail. Knowing you're "all in this thing together" will help.

Useful activities for prestart-up include, in addition to training in the skill areas of the new-school innovation(s), such experiences as:

- Role negotiation*
- Responsibilities clarification
- Team development
- Interpersonal skills development, especially in problem solving, cooperation, conflict management

During the start-up, implementers need continual support to reduce the effects of the inevitable buildup of stress and pressure. While it is known that people respond well to moderate amounts of pressure -- it gets their adrenalin going, they rise to the challenge -- too much of it will flag their spirit and drain their energy reserves. Thus, management (e.g., the principal or director, the assistant superintendent, the planning group, whoever is leading this effort) must provide the following help to the implementers:

- A buffer zone -- some shielding from outside pressures, since the internal pressure will be high enough. Some instances of buffering are fielding questions for the implementers, running interference for them, relaxing some of the less important requirements until the system is in place and working smoothly, providing outsiders with sufficient information to keep them at bay, refraining from attempts to take charge of everyday functions best left to the staff.

- Needed resources -- enough money, time, people, and materials to do what has to be done.

- Supportive groups -- implementers should know that they belong to a supportive group capable of helping each other when needed. Thus, the building of team

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* Role negotiation is a means of resolving role conflicts that often involves participants in listing:

1. Things the other person should increase in quantity or quality.
2. Things the other should decrease in quantity.
3. Things the other does that facilitate matters and should not be changed.

These ideas were developed by Roger Harrison and are reported in Schmuck, Richard A., et al. Handbook of organization development in schools. Eugene, OR: CASEA, 1972.

structures, collaborative decision making, cooperation in solving problems, and a structure for informing others of difficulties being encountered should be established.

- Sensing systems -- methods for tracking progress, making plans, solving problems, gathering information, and so on for diagnosing the state of the system in order to correct difficulties.

- Fatigue monitoring -- implementers committed to their work tend to work longer hours than they should. They face burn-out, and the school faces weakening and bad decisions. Someone has to take responsibility for telling staff to go home and relax.

- Use of consultants -- the availability of consultants to provide help in such areas as monitoring of problems in organization functioning, helping staff deal with interpersonal conflicts, training in interpersonal skills and teaming, and documenting the start-up process for future analysis are valuable aids to the staff.

- Post-launching assessment -- a time is needed for dealing with problems, questions that arise only through the implementation, staff restructuring, budget, community relations, and so on. Sometimes this assessment is needed fairly early after start-up; other times, several months are needed before it's feasible to stop and look at what's happening.

Exercise

On the next page is "TAKING STOCK," an exercise that gives you the opportunity to plan a post-launching assessment of your new-school operation. It is a series of questions to spur your own thinking of what you can do that will fit your own situation.

DO

TAKING STOCK (45-60 min)

Consider the following questions and jot your ideas in the spaces provided. Share your ideas with others.

1. WHEN MIGHT BE A GOOD TIME FOR US TO STOP AND LOOK AT WHAT WE'RE DOING AFTER SCHOOL OPENS? (e.g., at the end of each day, after a couple of weeks, after a few months, etc.)

2. HOW COULD WE GO ABOUT THIS ASSESSMENT? (e.g., build in released time, close school for a day so we could meet, plan a weekend retreat, etc.)

3. SHOULD WE GET HELP FOR DOING (AND PLANNING) THIS ASSESSMENT? (e.g., organization development specialists, planning group members, etc.)

4. WHO ARE SOME GOOD POSSIBILITIES FOR US TO CONSIDER?

(Please turn the page.) EXERCISE 11

5. WHAT ARE LIKELY TO BE THE PROBLEM AREAS THAT WE'LL WANT TO LOOK AT? (e.g., team planning, problem solving, etc.)

6. WHAT ARE LIKELY TO BE THE STRONG AREAS THAT WE CAN LOOK AT (AND CONGRATULATE OURSELVES ON) WITH AN EYE TO STRENGTHENING THEM? (e.g., finding resources, etc.)

7. WHAT DATA-GATHERING SYSTEM CAN WE PUT INTO EFFECT SO THAT WE'LL HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION WITH WHICH TO WORK? (e.g., independent documenter, information tree among participants, etc.)

8. HOW CAN WE INSURE THAT WE PUT INTO USE WHAT WE LEARN IN THIS POST-LAUNCHING ASSESSMENT? (e.g., a task force to plan it, a watchdog on the staff, etc.)

Module 3
Troubleshooting after Start-up

TROUBLESHOOTING AFTER START-UP 3

WHY SHOULD WE ANTICIPATE PROBLEMS AND SEEK FEEDBACK?
WHAT AREAS SHOULD WE LOOK AT?

Once the school has started up -- staff, students, systems are in place and operating -- it becomes time to look at it in terms of its effectiveness: How effectively is it accomplishing its goals? How effectively is it satisfying the needs and expectations of teachers, students, parents, administrators?

While most energy, of course, goes into the implementation of the new school, some attention must be given to looking at that implementation, gathering data on how it is working and how participants feel about it.

The time for tinkering with the system is now, before it gets settled into place. Adjustments must be made on the basis of data collected on how the new school is functioning. This tinkering time will be especially needed in the start-up phase, which may last from six months to a couple of years.

The only way to correct the inevitable problems is to watch the new school and staff in action. Troubleshooting requires information! This module focuses on getting feedback from the system regarding the effectiveness of practices and the consequences of decisions.

WHY SHOULD WE ANTICIPATE PROBLEMS AND SEEK FEEDBACK?

Since much uncertainty exists in the start-up phase and since the grand design of the new school needs constant balancing with the existing realities of the new system as it unfolds, some method for getting feedback on how it is working (and not working) is needed.

Indeed, the stronger the commitment of the implementers to their vision of the new school, the more they will seek data to monitor their work, to guide their adjustments as they investigate whether they are on the way to achieving their goals. They need steady feedback to inform their subsequent decision making.

On the other hand, implementers' uncertainty and feelings of vulnerability during start-up may cause them to be hesitant to seek feedback that might reveal their failures.

The fact is, however, that something is going to go wrong somewhere. Anticipating where the problems are most likely to occur is one cure for the shock and disappointment that often accompanies problems in starting a new school, or any other system.

Exercise

By way of an introduction to the process of troubleshooting, consider the problem areas that appear in the exercise on the next page, "FORECASTING THE BREAKDOWNS." Participants at the work conference on problems and issues of creating new schools were asked to "list the main problems, barriers, and obstacles you have faced in planning and implementing your school." The list on the next page was constructed from complaints voiced by these participants.

Read the list and determine how likely it is that they will affect your school. Do this individually and then share your responses with others in your group.

DD

FORECASTING BREAKDOWNS

(45-60 min)

Estimate the probability of encountering each of the following problems at your school by circling one of the numbers opposite it.

	NOT LIKELY	???	MAYBE	PROBABLY
Student boredom	1	2	3	4
Class cutting (students)	1	2	3	4
Drugs (students)	1	2	3	4
Teacher burnout, disillusionment	1	2	3	4
Discipline problems	1	2	3	4
Governance structure not working	1	2	3	4
Tension among staff	1	2	3	4
Revisionism	1	2	3	4
Community non-support	1	2	3	4
Failure of leadership (principal)	1	2	3	4
Failure of commitment (principal)	1	2	3	4
Tokenism	1	2	3	4
Goal displacement	1	2	3	4
No assessment or token assessment	1	2	3	4
Lack of ownership (teachers)	1	2	3	4
Breakdown of program design (not thought through)	1	2	3	4
Lack of community trust in "new" techniques	1	2	3	4
Teachers' inability to cope constructively with politics of situation (defensiveness)	1	2	3	4

(Please turn the page.)

EXERCISE 12

	NOT LIKELY	???	MAYBE	PROBABLY
Breakdown in collaborative structures	1	2	3	4
Breakdown in communication with community	1	2	3	4
Lack of trust among staff	1	2	3	4
Lack of staff honesty in owning problems, weaknesses (scapegoating)	1	2	3	4
Lack of trust between staff and administration	1	2	3	4
Lack of daily responsiveness to each other's needs and feelings (staff)	1	2	3	4
Fear and uncertainty among staff	1	2	3	4
Lack of contingency plans for when things go wrong	1	2	3	4
Failure to reach students with meaningful programs	1	2	3	4
Resistance to and lack of sophistication about evaluation	1	2	3	4
Unwillingness to recognize that original vision not being achieved	1	2	3	4
Unwillingness to modify approach	1	2	3	4

Share your estimates with your group. Together decide which are the most probable for your school, and place an asterisk next to them.

As a group, decide which of those most probable ones are serious. Place another asterisk next to those.

Take some time to discuss those serious problems. What might be done to head them off now?

▶ FEEDBACK SEEKING VS. INTUITIVE ACTION

Getting feedback and bringing about change in response to that feedback are generally viewed as the keys to successful decision making and problem solving for a school. Both success outcomes require adequate quality information and the informed selection of solution strategies.

Seeking and incorporating feedback into the system, referred to as reflexiveness and adaptiveness, are even more crucial to new schools than to schools in general because of the high uncertainty and risk taking that accompanies the whole enterprise, not to mention the "we can do anything" notion. The "muddling through" approach to conflicts just won't work. The problem is nicely illustrated in the following quotation:

> *The school is started in an atmosphere of high energy and good will. The general commitment to a more humane way of operating, the high level of personal dedication, and the good feeling that permeates any new enterprise carry it through a honeymoon period of six months to a year. The positive experience of the honeymoon period sustains the belief that just about any problem -- student involvement in decision making, the development of a relevant curriculum -- can be solved in a free and open atmosphere with a strongly articulated commitment to interpersonal honesty.*
>
> *As the honeymoon draws to a close, small bits of evidence begin to accumulate that people haven't changed as much as was hoped. The all-school meeting fails. The school's tape recorders, which people used to be able to leave out, begin to disappear....Severe interpersonal conflicts between strong-willed staff members surface....Some kids consistently fail to follow through on any of their commitments....Some people wonder whether the alternative school is doing any more for them than the old school.**

Without a system for examining what is happening in the new school and then making needed adjustments to correct the difficulties, problems that might have beer resolved satisfactorily enter the unsolveable arena, and people become highly disillusioned.

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* Center for New Schools, "Strengthening alternative high schools," Harvard Educational Review, 42, 3, 1972, 336.

Miles et al (1978) see the problem as a dilemma between using feedback and acting on intuition. They write:

> *The literature on planned change is so full of exhortations to get feedback (which is naturally the rational, effective way to proceed) that it is easy to forget that collecting and using data can be an energy-consuming, often threatening, and fallible process. In any case, the choice of how much "objective" data to collect and use -- versus proceeding on P/I work with minimal explicit attention to the consequences of action -- does represent a dilemma.* *

[For more information on this dilemma and on collecting data, see GUIDE 1: SETTING THE STAGE FOR PLANNING, Module 3, pages 72-78.]

How do you stand on the use of feedback? Do you consider data collection, recordkeeping, objective testing, observation, reporting on results, etc. to be a hindrance to freedom and creativity? Or just impossible, given the time constraints? Or, perhaps, do you feel that notions of organic growth, planning as you go, subjective data, intuitive action, and seat-of-the-pants responses to problems are anathema to effectiveness and goal achievement in the new school?

Exercise

The statements in "RATE YOUR SCHOOL" on the next page may help you to assess where you stand on the dilemma between feedback seeking and intuitive action.

Rate your school (or your vision of the school) by circling one number between 1 and 5 for each of the statements.

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* Miles, Sullivan, Gold, Sieber, and Wilder. Creating new schools. New York: Center for Policy Research, Inc., 1978.

DO

RATE YOUR SCHOOL

(10-15 min)

For the statements below, circle a number between 1 and 5 to indicate your agreement or disagreement.

1 = strongly disagree
2 = disagree
3 = uncertain
4 = agree
5 = strongly agree

A. The implementers are very strongly committed to the goals of the school.	1	2	3	4	5
B. The level of uncertainty among staff is quite high.	1	2	3	4	5
C. Compared to other implementation ventures in my experience, the complexity of this one is quite high.	1	2	3	4	5
D. We need better methods for "pulse-taking" in the school.	1	2	3	4	5
E. There is a lot of pressure on the school to secure community support for its operation.	1	2	3	4	5
F. At this point, it seems that the school is extremely vulnerable to outside, often hostile, influences.	1	2	3	4	5
G. We already know pretty much how the school is going.	1	2	3	4	5
H. The staff has a strong tendency to stick together and support each other during difficult times.	1	2	3	4	5
I. Our school's survival is guaranteed for a good long amount of time.	1	2	3	4	5
J. Getting more data would disturb people, not help.	1	2	3	4	5
K. We don't have enough time or knowledge to map out a clear set of milestones for getting the school going.	1	2	3	4	5

(When finished, please turn the page.)

EXERCISE 13

COMMENTS ON YOUR RESPONSES TO THE STATEMENTS:

The statements refer to factors that tend to push a school towards either intuitive action, on the one side, or feedback utilization as a way of coping with events that occur during start-up.

A high score (4's and 5's) on statements A through E may mean that there will be a built-in need and commitment to data collection.

A high score on statements F through K may indicate that there are forces at work within your school that will push for intuitive action, as opposed to the collection and use of feedback.

▶ FACTORS OF IMPLEMENTATION SUCCESS

Before examining what kinds of data to collect, data collection methods, and how to use data once gathered, it might help to consider the following analysis of factors that influence implementation success.

Fullan and Pomfret (1977)* examined more than 15 documented studies of the implementation of innovations and found that determinants of implementation success could be organized into four broad categories, each containing specific variables. They are presented below.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INNOVATION

- Explicitness. Most educational innovations are not well defined. Often little attention is paid to specifying the essential features of the innovation through delineating the role changes, the structural requirements, the knowledge, the understanding, and the commitment needed. Low explicitness leads to confusion, a lack of clarity, and frustration on the part of implementers and a low degree of implementation. Counteracting this factor requires the development of a plan for how the details of these items are to be communicated to or developed by the implementers.

- Complexity. The more complex or difficult the change, the greater the need for new learning and hence the greater the risk of implementation failure. Fullan and Pomfret found that when an implementation necessitated complex changes in teachers' behaviors, especially in their teaching styles, roles, and norms, there was a greater degree of implementation failure than for implementation that required changes in structure, administrative procedures, and materials.

STRATEGIES

- Inservice training. The studies reviewed by the authors supported the conclusion that teachers who received maximum training, especially if they received a combination of pre-service and inservice training and helped to plan and make decisions within the inservice work,

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* Fullan, Michael and Alan Pomfret. "Research on curriculum implementation," Review of Educational Research (47), 1, Winter 1977, 335-397.

achieved a high degree of implementation success. The authors state: "Apparently, this experience functions to provide teachers with demonstration models and experiences as well as psychological reinforcement conducive to resocialization."

- Resource support. This has to do with the time, materials, and other facilities available during implementation. Lack of planning and stock-taking time, as well as inadequate materials, space, and equipment are common complaints voiced by teachers. These "basic needs" must be satisfied if teachers are to be free to address higher-order, implementation concerns. In addition, a low level of resource support can contribute to a lack of clarity and familiarity with roles and materials.

- Feedback mechanisms. This dimension refers to feedback structures as well as norms supporting open feedback and interactions among implementers. The absence of such mechanisms during implementation was found to be a crucial determinant of implementation failure. Additionally, teachers' anxieties in their new roles, power relationships between those providing and those collecting data, the degree of commitment on the part of the participants -- all were variables that affected the accuracy and effectiveness of feedback. Finally, peer feedback was found to be an important aspect of implementation success.

- Participation. Participative decision making; problem-solving strategies that involved user participation; staff involvement in the development of curricular guides; user selection of the instructional model; collaboration between the administration and teachers, and consultants, if there were any; user selection and design of inservice training were all found to be factors associated with a strong, effective implementation.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ADOPTING UNITS

- Adoption process. Schools and projects that evolved from locally identified needs were better implemented than were those that arose in order to take advantage of an opportunity such as federal funds.

- Organizational climate. According to at least one study, high morale on the part of teachers, active support from principals and general support from superintendents all increased the chances of teacher change and perceived success of the implementation.

- Community support. Support by the community, as evidenced by a healthy interaction between the staff and the community, was the final factor that correlated with implementation success.

Exercise

On the next page is "THE LINCOLN ACRES CASE," which presents excerpts from a detailed case study analysis of the implementation of the Lincoln Acres open space elementary school.* The school was committed to the goals of (1) team teaching, (2) effective use of open space architecture, (3) multiple-age grouping, (4) individualization of instruction, and (5) comprehensive recordkeeping.

Your task is to comment on the descriptions with respect to the nine factors related to implementation success, that have just been presented. In addition, you are asked to consider the strengths or weaknesses of the excerpted event or analysis in terms of the school's five goals, as listed above, and to generate a corrective strategy where appropriate.

Both the nine factors of implementation success and the five goals of the school are reiterated on page 106 for your easy reference.

Feedback on the excerpts is offered at the end of the exercise.

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* Gold, Barry A. Change and conflict: educational innovation in community context. New York: Center for Policy Research, Inc., 1978.

NINE FACTORS OF IMPLEMENTATION SUCCESS:

- Explicitness of innovation's definition
- Complexity (and concurrent need for new learning)
- Inservice training
- Resource support
- Feedback mechanisms
- Participation
- Adoption process (based on locally defined needs)
- Organizational climate (supportive)
- Community support

FIVE GOALS OF THE LINCOLN ACRES SCHOOL:

- Team teaching
- Effective use of open space architecture
- Multiple-age grouping
- Individualization of instruction
- Comprehensive recordkeeping

DD

THE LINCOLN ACRES CASE (1 hr)

In the spaces that follow each excerpt:

Comment on what you think is happening with respect to the nine factors related to implementation success listed on page 106.

Consider the strengths or weaknesses of the excerpt or analysis with reference to the school's five goals listed on page 106.

Generate a corrective strategy where appropriate.

1. *Meta-goals discussed and formulated in the early stages of planning concerned the desired social system properties of the school. The most important were to establish a sense of "community," that is, an open, trusting environment, and to provide an atmosphere for professional growth through opportunities to learn more about teaching. Although an overall educational philosophy was never articulated, the phrase "doing what's best for kids" was a guiding principle, and the objective was to make the school a place where children would enjoy learning.*

STRATEGY:

2. *Problem solving and decision making in the early stages of the school were joint processes: Teachers had input into all major decisions and were actively consulted by the administration. Efforts to develop specialization differed among teams; some had elaborate division of labor, while others had none. Communication was primarily face to face, and all members were encouraged to participate in meetings and to seek and share advice. Along with this, the few rules and regulations that were developed were internalized and not codified. For example, deadlines for tasks assigned to teams were not set unless an external demand was present, such as a date by which budgets had to be submitted to the Board. There were, however, expectations in the group that tasks would receive serious consideration and be completed in an appropriate length of time. Finally, as stated above, the desired normative climate -- which was beginning to develop at this time -- was one of trust and a sense of community, both of which were actively cultivated in the group.*

STRATEGY:

(Please turn the page.) EXERCISE 14

3. *Approximately a month after school opened, the (grades) 2-3 teaching team was criticized by several parents for poor classroom management and particularly, the methods and materials used in the reading program. Among the critics were parent volunteers who had supported the school when it first opened. A central figure at this time was a school board member who was also a reading expert. He had a child in the 2-3 team and observed the teachers several times, offering suggestions for the improvement of the reading program. He also was one of a group of parents desiring an open house to have a presentation of the entire educational program of the team. The open house was held and went reasonably well, although some teachers felt a bit hassled by the tough questions asked of them by parents, and some confusion remained. After the open house and several alterations in the reading program and reorganization of the daily schedule, the board member/reading expert decided reluctantly to transfer his child to another public school in the district on the basis that the reading program as formulated was a good one but that it was not being delivered. Soon after, about ten other parents transferred their children to other schools.*

STRATEGY:

4. *The principal's comments: "I thought I would build a conservative model of what I had in New Hampshire here in Washingtonville. I was making commitments to teachers who wanted to teach in this situation. In 20 days from my arrival here, I had no chance to validate these assumptions with public opinion. Even among the district's professional staff, the opinion was circulated before I came here that Lincoln Acres would be an entirely open school. The hiring, architecture, and mindset was geared in that direction. Within the next few months, public opinion showed that was the opposite of what many people wanted. Those who chose me knew where I was coming from when they brought me here."*

STRATEGY:

5. *The role of the resource teacher throughout the school district was an ill-defined one: It was neither an administrative position nor a teaching position. The resource teacher was to provide aid to teachers, but the problem centered on the meaning of "aid." The resource teacher performed ambivalently in his role. He either did not know what his duties were or, if he did know, he never found a way of successfully translating them into action.*

STRATEGY:

(Please go to next page.)

6. *The parents began to mount a steady attack on the open space program, seeking to have permanent walls installed. The teachers began to feel overwhelmed, anxious, and increasingly upset, unable to understand what was happening. For some, things became so confusing and disturbing that they abandoned their efforts to make sense of the events in and around the school; they withdrew, insulating themselves from their surroundings. Even the researcher found himself puzzled and amazed by new developments. The phrase "what next?" was asked often in research project staff meetings when Lincoln Acres was on the agenda.*

STRATEGY:

7. *At one faculty meeting which included the principal and the resource teacher, there was a clear discussion of the problems in the faculty: The teachers said they objected to the reorganization of two of the teaching teams and the firing of one of the teachers. But conflict was so great, and relations so strained, that no mechanism for taking action to resolve the problems could be found. Following this, for all practical purposes, the principal was ostracized by the teachers.*

   In a response to what appeared to be internal difficulty in solving problems and making adjustments, the superintendent intervened by severely limiting the autonomy of the faculty, which eventually led to even more conflict. The principal's authority, already declining because of his inability to manage a variety of situations effectively, was further undercut when the superintendent in effect took over the leadership of the school by ordering other administrators to reorganize its troubled parts. By this time, the teachers were no longer able to influence decisions in any significant way either. The sense of powerlessness and depression grew.

STRATEGY:

8. *In one teacher's view, the problems of the school could be traced to the fact that at the beginning of the year there had been no discussion of "open education" or open space by the entire faculty, and that they simply had gone ahead with each team's making its own arrangements. The lack of unity of purpose increased because as the year progressed, there was no support from the principal.*

STRATEGY:

(Please turn the page.)

9. *A lot of the information in the school was from rumors. For instance, that point about children wanting to transfer out began as a rumor. The resource teacher told an administrator what the principal had told him; that's the way a lot of things got started. Said one teacher: "We talked about being open and honest, but it's not happening. At my old school nobody even pretended, everybody was closed and uptight, and I was more comfortable. At least you knew where you stood."*

STRATEGY:

FEEDBACK ON THE EXCERPTS

1. The failure to make explicit the roles and structural requirements for team teaching and open education led to much variation among teams, communication breakdowns in teams, and goal abandonment by two of the teams.
2. High participation of teachers in decision making was the norm but decreased as the principal made some arbitrary actions and community pressure mounted.
3. Community support never really existed. The little they did have eroded rapidly as more parents vocalized their criticisms of open education and teacher competence. Frequent visits, the use of parents as aides, and articles in the local newspaper worsened the problem.
4. This shows the lack of explicitness and failure of staff to base school goals on local needs, as perceived by parents (adoption process).
5. This excerpt shows the lack of explicitness, or a failure to foresee the complexities of new roles and the difficulties with implementing those roles.
6. It is clearly an expression of the complexity of events and pressures, as well as poor organizational climate. Morale dropped low because of the six months of continued criticism and pressure from the community.
7. The organizational climate was worsening dramatically during the second semester of operations.
8. This excerpt illustrates a combination of the lack of explicitness and lack of support from the principal (organizational climate).
9. The breakdown in the feedback structure is evident. Twice-weekly meetings, personal growth, teacher meetings and conferences -- all intended as occasions for peer feedback -- broke down within weeks of start-up.

WHAT AREAS SHOULD WE LOOK AT?

Troubleshooting requires being aware of the various parts of the new system so that you can watch them working together. What are those various parts?

There are nine elements of a school design, as described in considerable detail in GUIDE 2: DESIGNING YOUR SCHOOL. The elements listed below represent the key dimensions of a school organization that should be looked at in any troubleshooting process.

1. GOALS

- Aims in relation to students, staff, community
- How clear the goals are
- How owned the goals are by participants
- Progress in achieving the goals

2. GOVERNANCE

- How well the governing constitution for the new school is working out
- How effective and accepted are the rules which were set
- How the decision-making structure is working
- Effectiveness of the conflict resolution plan
- Power distribution
- Grievance mechanism

3. STRUCTURE

- Groups and roles in the school
- Work responsibilities
- Communication and influence with each other
- Regular meetings for the various roles and groups

4. CLIMATE

- The "feel" of the school (warm, supportive, fair, task-oriented, experimental, pragmatic, humane, etc.)
- Role of formal and informal reward system in supporting the desired climate

- The morale of staff and students
- Cohesiveness of staff, the willingness to help each other out

5. ORGANIZATION ASSESSMENT

- Existence of internal and external feedback mechanisms that provide data for self-correction, e.g.:

  Internal -- team meetings, faculty questionnaires
  External -- community meetings, an "external critic" who can point to the differences between words and actions and can locate sources of actual and potential problems

- Use of feedback data to achieve self-correction

6. PROBLEM SOLVING

- Existence of problem-solving mechanisms, e.g., whole-school meetings, staff meetings, team meetings, roving troubleshooter role
- Quality of problem solving
- Provisions for change and self-renewal through problem solving

7. SUPPORT SYSTEM

- Existence of technical and emotional supports for participants
- Opportunities for new learning and practice of new learning
- Built-in time for staff meetings, workshops, inservice training, etc. to deal with content of the innovation
- Provision for staff members to help one another
- Effectiveness of principal's role in support system
- Coordination of the support system

8. EDU-TECH SYSTEM

- Level of implementation of the innovation
- Effectiveness of the organization for instruction
- Effectiveness in meeting the needs of the students
- Fit of instructional program with the physical space
- Availability of resources
- Applicability of methods of evaluation of program, of staff, of students

9. ENVIRONMENTAL LINKS AND BUFFERS

- Effectiveness of the connection between the school and its environment -- the district, parents, the local community, professional associations, other educators, etc.
- Quality and quantity of information flow between the school and its environment
- Existence and effectiveness of buffering devices in protecting the school from too much contact, information, or influence from the outside environment

These, then, are the main organizational dimensions to be observed in the early implementation stages of the new school. For other dimensions and more detail, see GUIDE 2: DESIGNING YOUR SCHOOL, pages 77-82 and 114-117. Also, a "Design Checklist" appears on page 121 of GUIDE 2.

The next module in this guide discusses diagnosis and intervention as specific parts of troubleshooting after start-up.

Module 4
Diagnosis and Intervention

DIAGNOSIS AND INTERVENTION 4

HOW CAN WE DIAGNOSE OUR NEW SCHOOL?
WHAT ARE SOME WAYS TO COLLECT DATA?
WHAT ARE SOME MODES OF INTERVENTION?

Diagnosing your new system and intervening when necessary are activities best undertaken shortly after school is under way -- usually within the first three or four months.

While the primary business of a school is to provide a place, staff, and materials that permit every student to maximize his or her learning potential, it is also true that the school is a complex social system that must be organized to perform that service. Many people, ideas, and resources are brought to bear on the teaching/learning focus. How they function, as a system, must be looked at diagnostically if they are to be aided in their efforts. This look at the system is, of course, additional to looking at the results of their actions, as translated in student behaviors, learnings, attitudes, and so forth.

This module, then, deals with diagnosing the system, collecting data, and intervening in the system. These topics have been dealt with exhaustively elsewhere. Our purpose here is to describe them briefly and refer to resources.

HOW CAN WE DIAGNOSE OUR NEW SCHOOL?

Diagnosis is the process of recognizing that something is wrong or needed and finding out why. Diagnosis is a problem-finding process that begins with a felt difficulty (a discrepancy between the real and the ideal) and proceeds more or less explicitly (usually less) through a problem identification step and then fact finding.

Diagnosis can be laid out in the following steps:

- Get reliable picture of performances, behaviors
- Specify discrepancies between the real and the ideal
- Consider the processes and factors that affect the school and its social system
- Assess the current status of these processes and factors in the school
- Decide which of these processes and factors you can change

Diagnosis involves distinguishing causes from symptoms. It also calls for confronting people with the problems, getting them to recognize the data and to own or accept the discrepancies between the desired and the actual. Thus, diagnosis is part "scientific method" and part communication skills.

Diagnostic models vary a good deal according to one's theory of what's important in organizational life, of what is changeable, and the relation between these two. Module 3 of this guide presented nine elements of the organization to be looked at. There are other models; for example, Miles'* scheme includes:

- Goal focus
- Communication adequacy
- Optimal power equalization
- Resource utilization
- Cohesiveness
- Morale
- Innovativeness

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* Miles, Matthew B. "Planned change and organizational health: figure and ground," in Change processes in the public schools. Eugene, Oregon: CASEA, 1965, 11-34.

- Autonomy (of organization in environment)
- Adaptation
- Problem-solving adequacy

There are other models, as well, each emphasizing different aspects of organizational functioning. See below for some references.*

The diagnosis process isn't effective if done once, or even twice. Rather, a perpetual recycling of diagnosis (and later intervention) becomes a way of life for the effective leader -- in this case, the principal -- to keep the school alive, responsive to existing needs, better able to carry out its day-to-day tasks.

Thus, the whole cycle, of which diagnosis is a part, looks like this:

- Collect data
- Diagnose state of the system (synthesize data, look at causes, invoke theory)
- Specify change goals
- Design intervention
- Carry out intervention
- Evaluate (new data collection), leading to recycling

This sounds like a tall order, particularly when there are so many other things to do in the new school. But remember, the process is much more informal than the words used to describe it would imply, and second, the results are well worth the time put into it.

Once you get the data, the main problem is making sure that your diagnosis actually follows from the data, not from any private, pre-existing theories you might be harboring.

A simple way to begin diagnosing the state of your system is to ask some fruitful, diagnostic questions that get answers when applied. These would include:

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* Blake, Robert R. and Jane S. Mouton. Consultation. La Jolla, CA: NTL/Learning Resources Corporation, 1976.

Schein, Edgar H. Process consultation: its role in organizational development. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1969.

Schmuck, Richard and Matthew Miles. Organization development in schools. LaJolla, CA: University Associates, 1971.

Weisbord, Marvin. Diagnosing your organization: a six-box learning exercise. Wynnewood, PA: Organization Research and Development, 1977.

- WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS -- WHERE DOES IT HURT? (E.g., Individual staff members may feel isolated; class cutting is on the rise; less than adequate communication system, etc.)
- WHAT STRENGTHS DO YOU BRING TO THE PROBLEM SITUATION?
- WHAT WEAKNESSES IN THE SYSTEM EXACERBATE THE PROBLEM(S)?
- WHERE ARE THE GAPS BETWEEN THE REAL AND THE IDEAL?

The force field analysis technique is a useful tool for identifying a set of facilitating and restraining forces at work on a problem situation. By generating these forces, you may find it easier to find corrective strategies.

Answering the above diagnostic questions may be done by completing a force field analysis. The directions for doing so are below, and a sample force field chart is on the next page.

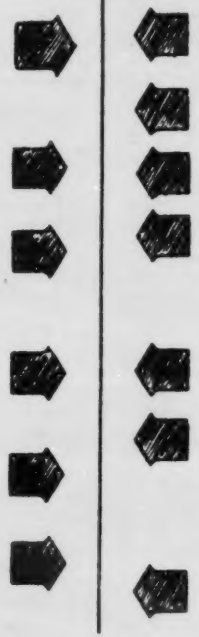
- DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING A FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS CHART.

1. State an abbreviated version of the problem on the lines provided at the bottom of the chart -- the reality.
2. On the lines at the far right of the chart, describe the ideal state -- the goal.
3. On the lines at the left of the chart, state the opposite of this ideal state.
4. Underneath the heading "Facilitating Forces," list what you consider to be the major forces operating in your school to increase/facilitate/insure the movement toward your ideal state. Under the heading "Restraining Forces," list what you think are the major forces operating to decrease/diminish/prevent movement toward the ideal state.
5. Place an asterisk next to those important forces that are operating in your school, the most critical ones.
6. Share your chart with your group.
7. Brainstorm ways of decreasing the strength of the restraining forces.
8. Brainstorm ways of increasing the strength of the facilitating forces.
9. Design a concrete plan of action to remove the discrepancy between the present state and the ideal state.

FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS

FACILITATING FORCES

RESTRAINING FORCES



OPPOSITE OF GOAL:

GOAL (IDEAL STATE):

PROBLEM (LEVEL OF PRESENT REALITY):

Exercise

On the next page is "DIAGNOSTIC STAFF MEETING," an exercise whose purpose is to help you to take a quick look at the state of your work and to plan for needed improvements.

You may wish to incorporate the use of a force field analysis, as described earlier, into this exercise by having people work individually on charts before the meeting or together during the meeting to identify some of the forces at work in your school. Or, you may prefer to do this exercise informally, as presented in the directions.

Someone will be needed to facilitate movement from one activity to the next.

Useful references on diagnostic and team building methods include:

Dyer, William G. Team building: issues and alternatives. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1977.

Fordyce, Jack K. and Raymond Weil. Managing with people: a manager's handbook of organization development methods. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1971.

Schmuck, Richard A., et al. The second handbook of organization development in schools. Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield Press, 1977.

DD

DIAGNOSTIC STAFF MEETING (2 hrs)

1. As principal, prepare a brief list of categories on which you feel you need diagnostic information.

   EX: Things we are doing well, doing poorly
   Achievement of goals
   How we are working together

2. At a staff meeting, share your list and get additions from members.

3. Set up meeting procedures for eliciting people's information and views.

   EX: Work in subgroups
   Go around the room
   Do some "polling" on issues
   Pairs interview each other

4. Collect the information on newsprint.

5. Sort out the major themes in the data. List them.

6. Plan next steps.

   EX: Specific action on some themes
   Set up a staff planning meeting
   Principal or committee to plan action steps and report back
   A two-day staff retreat session

EXERCISE 15

WHAT ARE SOME WAYS TO COLLECT DATA?

Accurate diagnosis of your problems in the new school will, of course, help you in identifying appropriate solutions. Many barriers exist to prevent educators from looking at the state of their system (social): Mostly, there's too much else to be done to have the luxury of stepping out of your implementer role in order to watch yourself in action. And yet, the less diagnosis you do, the more problems you will have in doing what you set out to do.

In order to judge the effectiveness of an innovation or the ways in which a staff works together, it is usually important to find out where people are at the beginning of an implementation phase with respect to the different goals and outcomes. In some cases, you can ask people to provide their own base rates (e.g., do you feel more productive, listened to, effective, than you did last year?), but in most instances this is either impossible or an unreliable measure.

You might use paper and pencil measures, a questionnaire, interviews, observation, or available documents for collecting data. It is important, though, that the two measures (pre-measure and post-measure) be as much alike as possible and administered in near identical circumstances to insure their comparability.

It is necessary to take more than two measurements in order to determine that outcomes of interest have stabilized. This is especially important with affective measures and with all observations and self-report measures. A reliable outcome is one that continues to occur, given a continuation of the innovative practice or conditions -- it is an observable trend.

Some ways of collecting data are suggested here. Typically, they fit into the general modes of observation, interview, written response, and unobtrusive measures. As you go about the task of collecting data, it is important to remember that being aware of what is happening is the first and most important aspect. It may not always unfold before your eyes in the most useful manner. You may have to dig it out, or gather it from a number of sources simultaneously (and not as neatly as you might like). Remember, too, that the very act of collecting data may change the types of responses you get from respondents. Some may give the answers they think you are seeking. Others may alter

their actions or responses so subtly that neither you nor they know they are doing it. Some may feel reluctant to tell the truth. Some questions may be misinterpreted, or could be answered differently by the same person at various times.

To a certain extent, these problems can be controlled by asking questions in an open-ended, or a value-free, way; asking the same questions in several different ways; asking the same questions of a number of different people; and verifying data from observation or interviews through the use of other methods, e.g., questionnaires or available documents.

Here are some examples of data collection methods:

- TESTIMONIALS. Testimonials are notoriously unreliable and enormously important. The key to reliability with respect to testimonials is selection. Any method of selection that insures that every remark has an equal chance of being reported, that every participant or shareholder has an equal chance of being heard, constitutes a useful application of the testimonial technique.

- SNAPSHOTS AND FILM. Pick a day at random. Keep the date a secret. Make plans to launch an all-out attempt to capture everything that is happening on that day. Observe a random sample of classes. Interview a random sample of teachers and students. Take photographs of key areas at a pre-specified time. Make a movie by following a student through the day.

- PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION. Observe classrooms. Ask questions. Take a stream of written notes. Repeat the process in order to insure both adequate scope and depth so that you take into account:

  - Variability among behavior settings
  - Variability over time
  - Variability among subgroups (students, aides, teachers)

  You can use running accounts of all that you observe in, say, a 15-minute period, either with one subject or a group of subjects. You might first list a number of activities and then note the frequency of appearance of each. You could do headcounts of people engaging in particular tasks at, say, two-minute intervals.

- MINI-INTERVIEWS. Interview a stratified random sample of staff, students, and parents. You might also conduct group interviews.

- QUESTIONNAIRES. Use open-ended question formats, such as having the respondent finish a sentence or write a paragraph on a topic. Use multiple choice questions. Try scaled response questions in which the respondent selects on a scale from, say, 1 to 5 responses from "very often" to "never," for example.

- IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS. Select a small, stratified random sample. Follow these individuals through achievement tests, participant observations, analysis of school records, mini-interviews, and questionnaires.

- AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS. Study school records on attendance, tardiness, illness, visits to the school nurse, class cutting, achievement, disciplinary actions, and so on.

- PUBLIC NOTEBOOKS. Consider the use of a visitor's notebook, placed in a central location in the school hallway, and request that visitors to the new school write down their comments, impressions, suggestions in the book. *This method was used successfully by the Director of the Arts Coop school. He later utilized the notebook in support of his efforts to get additional resources for the school.*

  Try a student notebook, also placed in a central location of the school. This notebook serves as a place for students to write their comments on what particularly valuable experiences they've had during the week, things they responded positively and negatively to, what suggestions they had, and so forth. *This method was also used by the Arts Coop Director, who avidly devoured (and attempted to incorporate into the school) the ideas offered by students.*

- STAFF FEEDBACK SESSIONS. Use regular meetings with builtin feedback sessions for airing staff concerns, successes, suggestions, and criticisms. For example, a post-meeting reaction sheet on which staff members could anonymously list their problems, ideas, and suggestions might be helpful in getting a dialogue going at the next session and provide a reading of what people are feeling in general about system functioning.

There are a number of tools for gathering data -- e.g., the force field analysis, ranking instruments, opinion surveys, expectations questionnaires, role perception instruments, observation schedules, and so on. Some excellent resources for samples of such tools are:

Fordyce, Jack K. and Raymond Weil. Managing with people: a manager's handbook of organization development methods. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1971.

Fox, Robert S., et al. Diagnosing professional climates of schools. Fairfax, VA: NTL Learning Resources Corporation, 1975.

Schmuck, Richard A., et al. The second handbook of organization development in schools. Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield Press, 1977.

WHAT ARE SOME MODES OF INTERVENTION?

The notion of intervening once implementation has gotten under way is not one that appeals to everybody. Typically, people divide on two lines: One side takes a laissez faire approach, believing that in general, the system is working as well as can be expected and things will work out if only they're left alone for awhile. This side believes that trying to oil the machinery here and there is akin to throwing a monkey wrench into the whole business.

The other side adheres to a more activist approach that looks carefully at the system's workings, assumes that good implementation doesn't just happen by itself, and is ready to move in with the needed gear for reshaping the system by firing people, reorganizing the basic setup, adding new people, if necessary.

Neither of these approaches is inherently "right." They represent the two sides of a very real dilemma that new system implementers confront during the first months of startup. Thus, at two of our sites:

The principal at one of the open space Westgate elementary schools tended to routine duties and communicated with staff via mimeographed notices, saying:

> *We've had no time for faculty meetings. I don't even have time for lunch. Teams meet from time to time, and I talk with teachers individually. They prefer being alone. If they have problems, they come down to see me.*

But, at another Westgate open space school, the principal took an active, interventionist role by meeting regularly with teaching teams, holding weekly faculty meetings, and checking frequently with teachers on how they were doing. Several teachers reported to our researcher that they often hesitated to say anything negative to anyone because they knew "it would get back to George."

No matter which approach is taken, the one thing that remains true is that everything is an intervention. Thus, even if the most that you do involves collecting data on how the system is operating, the act in itself changes trust among participants, alters the nature of perceived problems, heightens expectations toward management, and makes participants more aware of what they're doing because they are being observed.

▶ INTERVENTION GUIDELINES

The steps generally associated with intervention include the following:

- Generate alternative intervention strategies
- Rank the strategies according to usefulness
- Select and implement appropriate strategies
- Get feedback on their effectiveness
- Revise as needed

These steps, of course, follow the diagnosis steps presented on page 118 of this module.

The best guideline concerning intervention, or the taking of action to solve a perceived problem, is to be very clear about what you want to accomplish. Stated otherwise, this means that you know very well what kind of problem you have, who is affected by it, and what the situation will be like once you have corrected the problem:

- WHO IS AFFECTED? Consider these possibilities before deciding what you want to say in response to this question: Is it you? Is it one other person? Is it a small group of people? Is it the entire school? Is it the community or society at large?

- WHAT KIND OF A NEED IS IT? There are many ways to classify kinds of problems. The following considerations may prove helpful:

  - Lack of clarity or disagreement about goals.
  - Lack of clarity or disagreement about the means of achieving goals.
  - Lack of skills needed to carry out a particular means.
  - Lack of material resources.
  - Inaccurate communication.
  - Too little or too much communication.
  - Different perceptions of the same thing.
  - Insufficient time, or schedules that don't coincide.
  - Roles are lacking or are inappropriate.
  - Norms are restrictive, unclear, or misinterpreted.

- Conflicts of ideology.
- Lack of clarity or a conflict about decision making, i.e., power struggles.
- Inappropriate or inadequate expression of feelings.
- Conflict related to individual differences.

- WHAT IS THE GOAL FOR IMPROVEMENT? Ideally, this should be stated so clearly that anyone reading your statement would know how to determine when the goal had been reached. It would tell exactly who would be doing what, where, how, and to what extent. Until you know where you are going, it's very difficult to make and carry out plans to get there. The clearer you are about your intended target at any given time, the more likely you will be to recognize when it is an inappropriate target, should this prove to be the case.

Some rules of thumb for intervention are:

- SIMPLICITY: The simpler a change is perceived to be by the participants, the more willing they'll be to give it a try.

- DIVISIBILITY: Changes that are implemented gradually or in small units are more likely to be tried than are ones that seem to demand total commitment at once.

- VISIBILITY: The more visible the end results of a change are, the more likely it is to be accepted and to have long-term effects.

- COMPATIBILITY: Changes that are perceived as compatible with ongoing practices are more likely to be undertaken than are those that appear to be far removed.

- USEFULNESS: An individual's perception of the usefulness of a change with respect to his or her priorities and values has a strong influence on whether or not the change is given a try.

Thus, the message here is to make as striking a change as easily as you can, without creating a big fuss among participants. It's not too easy a bill to fill; expect some resistance or at least hesitancy from implementers.

▶ MODES OF INTERVENTION

The following list includes eight general and non-dependent modes of intervention. You may wish to add to this list from previous readings and your own experience:

- INSERVICE TRAINING: Procedures involving direct teaching or experience-based learning. Workshops, retreats, lectures, simulations, and demonstrations are examples of strategies that involve change through education or re-education.

- PROCESS CONSULTATION: This involves watching and aiding the ongoing processes and providing the necessary coaching to improve them.

- CONFRONTATION: Bringing together the people involved in the problem (persons, roles, or groups). This strategy usually seeks to improve communication and requires problem clarification techniques.

- DATA FEEDBACK: A systematic collection of information is then reported back to appropriate people or units as a basis for diagnosis, planning, and problem solving.

- PROBLEM SOLVING: Meetings which take the process from problem identification to diagnosis to solution generation and selection to implementation.

- GOAL CHANGE: Replotting the future, selecting an alternate goal or an intermediate one. This strategy starts with the view that the error was in the plan, rather than the implementation.

- "OUTSIDE" CONSULTANTS: Bringing in a consultant to help solve the problem; it may include a consultant from within the system as well. Note that consultants can be used to provide the catharsis that might be needed to recognize that a problem is a PROBLEM; to assist in the clarification or reconceptualization of goals; to legitimize or facilitate the confrontation process; to give answers or data; to provide inservice training; or to solve the problem on his/her own.

- PERSUASION: Suggesting, encouraging, entreating, in order to attempt to bring about an improvement or change.

- STRUCTURAL CHANGE: Altering the rules, roles, authority network, workflow, procedures, demands, etc. in the school.

- PERSONNEL CHANGE: Moving, adding, and dropping people.

NOTE: A structural change is usually perceived as a more serious, radical strategy than is persuasion, for example. Structural changes are often reserved for more serious problems. This notion may be an obstacle to effective problem solving since some serious problems are amenable to persuasion (as with resolving interpersonal conflicts), and the best way to handle some minor problems often is through a change in structure (as in establishing a new communication channel between role groups).

▶ IMPLEMENTING IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

It has been said that "if a system is working, leave it alone." But, "most systems in trouble are not self-fixing." So, if you are committed to intervening in your system in an effort to bring about some change for the better, you'll want to consider:

- What is the strategy/activity that is most likely to bring about the desired state?
- Who should participate in the different activities that will be involved?
- Who should be kept informed of these activities?
- Who will be primarily responsible for seeing that the strategy is carried out?
- What is the timetable?
- What special resources will be needed to carry out the activities?

Exercise

On the next page is "INTERVENTION CHART," an exercise in which you can select an improvement goal and answer the above questions. Do the exercise individually or as a group. If you work alone, try to leave some time for comparing your ideas with those of others.

If you need some help in identifying the problem, you might want to see the section entitled "The S-T-P Model" on pages 49-54 in GUIDE 2: DESIGNING YOUR SCHOOL. It provides a model for identifying the Situation, the Target, and the Proposal for solving the problem.

DO

INTERVENTION CHART (1 hr)

Alone or with others, do the following and then fill in the chart on the next page.

1. State the problem situation that you want to work on.

2. Select a likely improvement goal for this problem situation. Be as specific as possible.

3. Brainstorm at least three or four strategies for achieving this goal.

4. Pick one of the strategies -- your best bet.

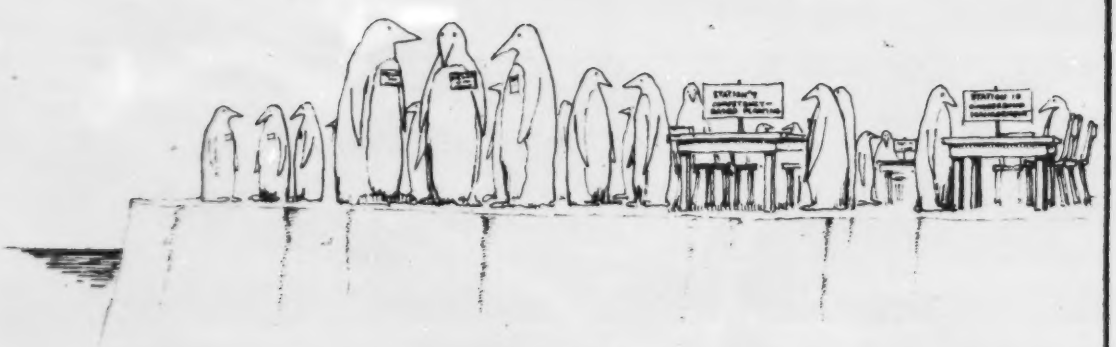
5. Fill in the chart on the next page according to how you might proceed.

(Please turn the page.)

EXERCISE 16

STRATEGY/ ACTIVITY?	WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?	WHO SHOULD BE KEPT INFORMED?	WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE?	WHAT IS THE TIMETABLE?	SPECIAL NEEDED RESOURCES?
1)					
2)					
3)					
4)					
5)					

Conclusion
Renewal and Stabilization



CONCLUSION: RENEWAL AND STABILIZATION

HOW CAN WE KEEP OUR SCHOOL IN GOOD WORKING ORDER?

A well-functioning school, a healthy school, is one with not only a clear sense of itself and its goals, but also a willingness, even an eagerness, to adapt itself to changing needs and situations. It functions effectively because it knows itself, sees positive potential in working and building together, and responds optimistically to change.

In this Guide we have looked at the following important processes:

- Linking plans to action
- Protecting the plan and the implementers
- Peopling the new school
- Troubleshooting after start-up
- Diagnosing and intervening

These processes have to do with establishing and fine-tuning the new school. The question now is: How do you keep it going -- how do you routinize the effective practices that you've established and at the same time maintain flexibility and adaptiveness?

▶ WHAT IS RENEWAL AND STABILIZATION?

By renewal and stabilization we mean the institutionalization of the sensing/diagnosis/intervention process across a long time frame in such a way that the new school maintains its problem-coping capability.

While we might agree that stabilizing the school, including its methods for continuing self-renewal is a major task of new-school implementers, there is danger in viewing this final phase of the planning/implementation process as one characterized by routinization rather than ongoing problem identification, reflexiveness, troubleshooting, and change.

The problem is a dilemma between routinization and flexibility: To solidify working procedures and their supporting structures or to preserve enough maneuvering space for responding to the unforeseen. Without the routinization, much energy is spent, the wheel is re-invented (again and again), and the school never gets a chance to settle into a productive work pace. And yet, an absence of space for flexibility often results in uniform treatment of situations that may require new solutions, people getting stuck in too comfortable grooves, less and less creative problem solving.

In the case of the Arts Coop director, who was strongly committed to an "interdisciplinary day" to cut across all art areas in the school:

> *Once the director had obtained reluctant agreement to include this innovation as a regular part of the new school, he continued to press for it by suggesting that interdisciplinary day always be held on Thursday, so students and faculty would "get used to it" and treat it as a regular part of the school -- they wouldn't have to decide each week when it would be held.*
>
> *The faculty objected to this routinization, pointing out that some faculty members were never at school on Thursdays, and thus true interdisciplinary work involving all areas would not be possible. The director persisted, and Thursday became interdisciplinary day.*

Thus, while the intention was to create an innovative structure, its unowned routinization could be a likely cause of its untimely death. The opposite approach was taken at Lincoln Acres School, where the principal and faculty agreed not to formalize a hierarchical relationship within teams, preferring to allow team members to work in whatever method turned out to be most productive:

> *In the midst of mounting school pressures, teachers elected to meet for problem-solving sessions only as needed. But the effect was that more and more, the difficult problems fell to the principal for solution. The teachers felt more and more out of communication with one another and increasingly unable to cope with parent dissatisfactions. When the faculty finally did meet for problem solving, it was directed against the principal.*

Thus, without a structure for ongoing problem solving, the staff of Lincoln Acres fell into some very hard times.

When consultants attending the Work Conference on Planning and Implementing New Schools were asked what kind of help they thought was needed the most in the planning/implementation process, a frequent response was: *Some assistance in establishing norms and structures that internalize an ongoing renewal process in the school so that problems which arise can be continuously solved and seen as data for ongoing development.*

Analyses of schools that maintain a capacity for problem solving and renewal can be said to have many or all of the following characteristics*:

1. RECEPTIVITY TO CHANGING ASPECTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT

   - Awareness of the changing dynamics within the school community
   - Alertness to promising practices for instructional improvement
   - Skill in bringing in available knowledge and helping agents

2. RESPONSIVENESS TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND WILLINGNESS TO TAKE ACTION ON THAT ENVIRONMENT

   - Mechanisms for sifting, transmitting, and protecting what is valuable within the school community
   - Proactive planning and movement into action for the improvement of instruction
   - Mobilization to bring in knowledge and helping agents

3. OPTIMAL USE OF RESOURCES

   - Drawing upon non-committed organizational resources within the school community
   - Flexibly rearranging current resources to bring about instructional improvement
   - Mutually adaptive interaction with knowledge and helping agents

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* This formulation was originally developed by Richard A. Schmuck and Philip J. Runkel in working papers for the Documentation and Technical Assistance Project (Center for New Schools, Chicago, and Center for Educational Policy and Management, University of Oregon).

4. OPTIMAL MAINTENANCE OF MORALE

- Cohesive school community
- Instruction that satisfies basic motives for achievement, power and affiliation
- Enlightening and stimulating knowledge and helping agents

These, then, are the characteristics that facilitate not only the creation of a problem-solving capacity in schools but also the building in of such an approach. Renewal becomes a real and regular part of the day-to-day business of the school's operation.

Renewal involves a systematic process of dealing with problems which have surfaced and making this process an ongoing function in the school.

Simply, we are talking about HOW TO BUILD IN REGULAR METHODS for functions that may already get carried out occasionally:

- GETTING DATA
- DIAGNOSING PROBLEMS
- INTERVENING

Because renewal is a systematic, long-range process approach to problem solving, not a crisis-oriented, short-term activity, attention must be given to building it into the operating framework.

▶ WHAT ARE SOME WAYS TO BUILD IN RENEWAL?

As you look at your own organizational constraints, interpersonal processes, decision-making methods, and ways of working together to reach your goals, it may become evident that an ongoing method of assistance will be needed. WHO will be responsible for ongoing renewal at your school?

We discuss four methods here. See Schmuck, Runkel, Arends and Arends, The second handbook of organization development in schools (1977), for a more detailed treatment of the first three areas. They include: (1) establishing new roles, (2) linking with outsiders, (3) part-time specialists in cadres, and (4) self-renewal teams.

1. ESTABLISHING NEW ROLES

One way to see that ongoing renewal processes are built into the school's operation is to create new roles that focus specifically on doing just that. For example, one or more persons in the school could serve as renewal coordinators or members of a renewal coordinating task force. They would be responsible for planning for renewal and/or providing consultation to staff members.

Persons filling such a role would require training if they were to achieve the competencies needed to function in this area. The advantage of placing an insider in such a role is one of familiarity with the school's problems as well as with the various resources that can be brought to bear on these problems. In addition, the insider is more accessible to the staff by being on site and tends to be available over a longer period of time.

The drawbacks of using insiders in these roles are that development of legitimacy as an "expert" may be difficult to achieve among peers and duality of roles may cause conflicts.

Another example of a new role would be that of an omsbudman for teachers and students.

2. LINKING WITH OUTSIDERS

Bringing in outside consultants to work with school personnel to help them explore their concerns, collect data, plan interventions, assess progress, and so on is another method of renewal. Long- or short-term contracts can be made with consultants from universities, nonprofit research organizations, business and industry.

Advantages of using outside consultants include their expertise in the field, experiences with many different types of organizational settings, and their own support systems.

Disadvantages of linking with outsiders are that entry into the school (trust building, establishing credibility) may be difficult for them to achieve; upon finishing their work, they leave, thus making them unavailable or at least not readily accessible for ongoing help; and there aren't too many trained specialists who work with schools, although their numbers are growing.

3. PART-TIME SPECIALISTS IN CADRES

Building a cadre of trainers and consultants from within the ranks of school or district staff is an effective way of achieving ongoing renewal processes. Cadre members split their time between cadre consulting functions and their own regular jobs, thus bringing to the cadre the skills and networks of resources and communication they use in their regular work. While cadre members are drawn from various roles and subsystems within the district (could apply to within schools too), they do not consult with their own groups.

The advantages of this method are that insiders develop their own improvement processes and earn the trust of their peers; and, in the long run, it is less expensive than hiring series of short-term outsiders over a period of years. There is more opportunity for creating a coherent, ongoing, long-term renewal program.

Two cadres that have been established in Kent, Washington and Eugene, Oregon, provided such work help as building staffs (communication, goal setting, problem solving, decision making, survey feedback, assessing progress); establishing multi-ethnic or racial teams to aid teachers; aiding student councils with problem solving; and promoting cooperation between PTA presidents and school principals. These cadres are described in The Second Handbook.

4. SELF-RENEWAL TEAMS

School staff members, working in conjunction with, say, a district organization development department, could establish a renewal process by making a contract with themselves to do so. This might involve several hours per week for six months to a year and would result in the creation of an ongoing problem-solving process.

Released time would be needed for participants, who could work at a school-wide, cabinet, department, or classroom level. The advantage of this approach is the building of a high level of ownership among staff members as they plan their own way, with the occasional help of others. The disadvantage is that such a group might close up, not involve others, and thereby lose important assistance that could be beneficial.

A variation consists of a "mutual consultants" self-renewal team approach in which one team (from a subgroup in the school or from another new school) acts as consultant to the other on their problems. Thus, each team

helps and is helped. This variation would require a willingness to work with each other plus the availability of a counterpart (either within the school or in another new school) to work with. The district OD department (if one exists) or an outside consultant might be needed to set up and install the helping/being helped network, aid both teams in identifying/clarifying problems they'll work on, and help teams to identify problem-solving skills.

The main difference between the self-renewal team and the part-time specialist cadre approach is that the former works on its own problems, while the latter does not. Also, the cadre involves more training in consultative work since the model intends for cadre members to work with a number of different subgroups.

Any serious renewal process is a challenge and worthy of your best efforts. Because of its widespread focus on the workings of the system, conditions that support it must be present. Some of these conditions include:

- School capacity for self-help problem solving
- Staff acceptance of such a process
- Widespread participation in the effort
- Consultant resource help
- Administrative support -- provision of planning time, dollars
- Belief that improvement is possible
- Commitment to continuing self-renewal

Time and energy commitments are crucial and can be considerable when added to regular job functions. There may be such activities as:

- Training workshops or seminars on special topics, e.g., methods of group work, new teaching methods

- Process consultations with someone who may observe meetings and give feedback on their workings, or provide "third party" help to interpersonal problems, or perhaps work with people to help them think through problems

- Ongoing problem-solving sessions with one another

- Task forces which work on particular problems, such as student climate, communication with parents, etc. and report back to the whole staff their action recommendations

- Trying out new procedures, policies, rules, and roles

Excellent resources on consultation, team building, and short retreat designs for workshops include:

- Dyer, William G., Team building: issues and alternatives. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1977.
- Fordyce, Jack K. and Raymond Weil. Managing with people: a manager's handbook of organization development methods. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1971.
- Schein, Edgar H. Process consultation: its role in organization development. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1969.

Exercise

On the next page is "OUR RENEWAL EFFORTS," a short exercise to help you reflect upon and take stock of what you are now doing to renew and how you might strengthen your efforts.

You may do the exercise individually or as a group.

DD

OUR RENEWAL EFFORTS

(20-30 min)

Answer the questions below and refer to the sections listed by page numbers as needed.

1. WHAT METHODS ARE WE NOW USING IN THE SCHOOL TO GET DATA ON HOW WE ARE FUNCTIONING?
   (See pages 125-128.)

WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO STRENGTHEN OUR DATA COLLECTION CAPABILITY AND BUILD IT INTO OUR REGULAR OPERATION BY:

2. WHAT METHODS ARE WE NOW USING TO DIAGNOSE OUR PROBLEMS IN THE SCHOOL?
   (See pages 118-123.)

(Please turn the page.)

EXERCISE 17

WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO IMPROVE OUR DIAGNOSIS OF PROBLEMS AND BUILD IT INTO OUR REGULAR WORK ACTIVITY BY:

3. WHAT TYPES OF INTERVENTIONS ARE WE NOW USING IN THE SCHOOL TO CORRECT OUR PROBLEMS?
(See pages 129-136.)

WE MIGHT STRENGTHEN OUR USE OF INTERVENTION AND MAKE IT A REGULAR PART OF OUR WORK BY:

▶ IN CONCLUSION

There is no real conclusion. As has been said over and over, many times and many ways, renewal and stabilization are ongoing processes. They complete the circle. They re-connect with the beginning -- the vision, the planning, the design, the implementation, the diagnosis, the intervention.

Life goes on, in some form or another, whether you renew or not. Renewal allows you to affect the quality of school life. Awareness of what is going on and vigilance against destructive forces are rewarded by dynamic, positive social system workings and a responsive, adaptive approach to the environment.

Seymour Sarason, in The creation of settings and future societies (1972), tells us:

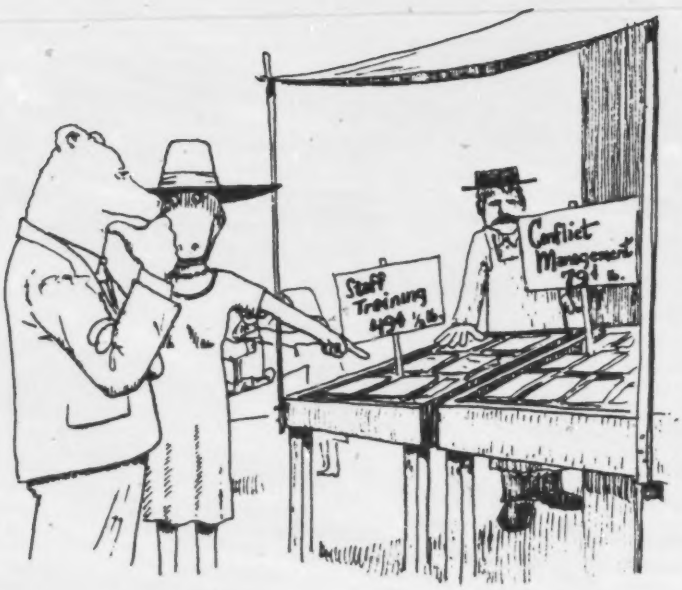
> Where new knowledge and understanding will take us is not predictable. It is hard to accept the fact that the more you know the more you need to know and that it is an endless process that does not end in a utopia. There will always be problems. This is the consequence of all new knowledge... (p. 284).

New knowledge leads to awareness of new problems which leads to new solutions (knowledge) and that in turn leads to new awarenesses, and so on. The importance of playing the role of social scientist and watching oneself in action and commenting on that participation cannot be overstated.

Remember, a system can fail in an infinite number of ways. And while there are times when it may be better to leave well enough alone, these times are rarer than you think.

We wish you well as you begin your renewal cycle.

Resources



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